

The Reality Of Our Natures And The Nature Of Our Realities

TROONATNOOR: The Reality Of Our Natures And The Nature Of Our Realities, Volume 2

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THE REALITY OF OUR NATURES AND THE NATURE OF OUR REALITIES

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Holistic Interrogations

The Philosopher-Prophet of The Eden Protocols

TROONATNOOR

T.E.P
The Eden Protocols

The Realities Of Our Natures
And
The Nature Of Our Realities

Markus Heinrich Rehbach
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Introduction

This book offers everything you can expect from Philosophy. It answers many questions you already have, and many that you might never have thought of asking. Yes, it is about the meaning of life, the universe, and everything. This book interrogates The Realities Of Our Nature, And The Nature Of Our Realities TROONATNOOR, providing the basis for a truly holistically informed consent.

I was surprised to find many convergences between my own ideas, which I feared were too revolutionary and new to be taken seriously by anyone, and those spanning the entire history of philosophy. My writing may appear derivative to those of you who have studied philosophy in depth. I have been constantly surprised whenever I came across one of my 'own' arguments in the works of earlier philosophers. Read more in 'Convergences'. It provides a fairly exhaustive description of the most compelling philosophical arguments and the most fascinating philosophers who ever dared record their thoughts. In the process we de-construct a lot of 'junk' philosophy. 'Religion' should disabuse any open-minded person of religious dogma.

The holistic philosopher

The authentic philosopher is a seeker of truth. They are engaged in the pursuit of wisdom. They do not seek to prove any particular argument to be right or wrong. Their hearts, minds, ears, and eyes are open. They let the world speak to them. They accept the 'hit and miss' nature of all inquiry and creativity. They are quick to en-lighten themselves of 'misses'. They are patient in accumulating 'hits'. They accept that they are likely to be wrong more often than right. Thus they make no emotional commitment to ideas. They are free to emulate the 'binge and purge' nature of evolution. They recognize that meaning is reflexive. The meaning of any particular thing is its relationship to everything else. Hence the meaning of a thing can only be found by locating it within its holistic context. Sagacity refers to intelligence, insight, and perception. The holistic philosopher seeks to become a true 'sage'.

About my logo

The color blue is associated with reason, truth, and honesty. It is also the color of sunny days. Green is associated with hope, renewal, and life. The shades of blue and green I love most are those of twilight. Twilight with its soft light is the time of transitions. This soft light is also the ideal 1000 Lux light level for human 'vision'. In mathematics the triangle is a symbol for change. The triangle is also a symbol of perfection. Like any good argument it has a broad base, and comes to a point. The i is a universal icon for information. In my case it also represents people. The two triangles with their icons represent people coming together and sharing information, in search of synergies. The green i, representing hope and renewal, is reaching out to embrace the blue i, representing reason, to take it in its arms. Reason needs the love and support of hope, to avoid becoming bleak and despondent.

Climb above the confusion and noise

For Jung the volcano rising is a universal and timeless symbol for the birth of a new world. Of course L Ron Hubbard adopted it as the cover for his 'Dianetics'. I have unwittingly adopted it in the abstract form of green triangles. For Jung the volcano provided new ground, new foundations for higher consciousness. I hope you will follow me up the mountain, to where the holistic view illuminates the entire landscape, providing a holistically enlightened awareness of our mutual interests. From up here you can get a view of the big picture, and place all the parts in the context of a greater whole.

Right now your vision is limited by the topography of the landscape. Join me up here. The view is inspiring. However as long as no-one joins me, I will be damned to isolated, depressing loneliness. As I may not survive this isolation, I have left as many guideposts as I could for you to follow. I followed many of the sign-posts left by earlier adventurers. I have moved a few to make the route simpler and clearer. Some I have constructed myself. Together, these mark the way to the peaks of human potential, to the peaks of the positive potential for this experience engine we call life. These signposts are all present in TROONATNOOR, and my WordPress web pages.

I accept that some of you may still chose to live in the valleys and depths after having visited the peak. If you chose to descend again, then at least I will have offered you truly informed consent. But you have an obligation to yourself and everyone else to first make the climb. It is not that hard. All that is required is honesty, and a little effort. I have devoted so much energy to clearing the track, to cleaning up and repairing damaged and abandoned signposts, and erecting my own. I have been given no encouragement by anyone. No-one can expect me to endure, for much longer, the loneliness, social isolation, rejection, abandonment, and active victimization I have endured.

'Muddles'

Human thinking is a mixture of vague ideas, superstitions, logic, befuddled-logic, logic with invalid assumptions, valid assumptions with poor logic, emotional motives, and quasi-rational behavior, so it is impossible to trace the history of religions, rites, superstitions, and beliefs with any clarity. All human thinking is muddled. We are prone to the most absurd assumptions, attributions, inferences, deductions, and beliefs. Why? Because we are emotional, rather than rational beings. We construct reality inside our brains. The reality we construct reflects our fears, desires, hopes, and aversions, at least as much as it does any objective external reality.

I simply listened longer and harder to the same 'voice'

The same 'voice' that Akhenaton, Jesus, Mohamed, Lord Krishna, Mahavira, Buddha, and all the other social prophets throughout history 'heard', is the same voice that lead to my 'Protocols'. The only difference is that I listened harder, and for longer. Of course I am talking in analogy and metaphor. I have gained insights from working on this manuscript for around 2 decades now, which provide a great deal of transparency into the motivations behind, and formation processes that produced, all the religions that exist today. I am a philosopher-prophet as much as any of my predecessors. However I refrained from doing what most previous prophets did. They recycled older religions and 'gods', invoking them for a transfer of authority for their own protocols. Only Mahavira and Buddha are similar to me in this. See 'Religion' for details.

Once we recognize the motives for our construction of gods and other superstitious beliefs and practices, what we call religion, we can design the optimal religion, one that satisfies the same desires, while avoiding most of the dangerous dogma. Of course my religion would be in the interests of everyone and everything. Today's religions are compromised and dominated by the narrow interests of the beneficiary classes. The optimal religion would have faith in eternal, random new-births. It would validate all forms of consensual sexuality. It would affirm life and death, supporting universal access to euthanasia and birth-control. It would support responsible reproduction.

For all of you gurus out there: if you claim to have solution to the human condition, then demonstrate it by living among normal humans in daily life. Monastic life, or the life of a priest is artificial. To live such a secluded, controlled existence and then to preach to those in the trenches is absurd. You have no right to preach, and others have no reason to listen. Like Nietzsche, I seek a practical philosophy for the everyday.

Building immunity

It may be significant as an indicator of general attitudes and behaviors that some parents are putting glad wrap over birthday cakes so children can blow the candles out without blowing germs all over the cake. Some scientists are warning that many of our allergies and illnesses are the result children not being exposed to pathogens, at an early age, when the immune system can be stimulated into developing immunity. They recommend that children do play in the dirt, and with each other, and expose themselves to pathogens at an early age, so that they will develop antibodies that can protect them later in life. I hope to develop a more child-friendly equivalent of 'Religion' and 'TROONATNOOR' to expose children to 'Memes' at an early age, so they can build immunity to them, to secular and religious dogma, and muddled thinking.

Integrity and dis- integration

The concept integrity refers to the 'wholeness' of things. An organism, including the human organism, is an integration of parts into a whole. It has integrity when it is 'whole'. Integrity in terms of a person's character means that they are 'all of one piece'. Integrity means you don't wear masks. It means all of your behaviors are consistent with each other, and consistent with what you say and claim to believe. When we are not able to act authentically, consistent with what we believe and feel, we experience a true disintegration of our being. We are no longer whole. We feel dis-easy. This fracturing of our integrity weakens us, making us vulnerable to stresses and pathogens. When we scratch the surface of glass, or an egg, we damage its integrity, and it can easily be broken along the 'fracture' or 'fault line'. When our 'integrity' is 'fractured', we lose the strength that we have when we are 'whole'. Stresses that we would normally withstand break us. Viruses that we can normally manage to neutralize overcome our immune systems. Cell growth that would normally be controlled by brake chromosomes, goes unchecked. Cancers that we could normally eliminate grow and kill us. Hearts that would normally withstand shocks, fail us. We get sick and we don't recover as we otherwise would have. We die from things that wouldn't normally be able to kill us.

Interrogating the hegemonic social reality

Hegemony is holistic. The whole sphere contains an exclusive social reality. You will be well adapted to the loop if your secondary, and personal subjective reality corresponds with the sphere's hegemonic social reality. The better you internalize the sphere's hegemonic definitions and meanings, the more successful you will be, or at least feel.

Dissidence is mal-adaption, within the sphere. Challenge the sphere at your own peril.

The criteria for evaluation are looped. The definitions and meanings are looped. The legitimate questions and means of inquiry are looped. The currencies of interaction, of power, powerlessness, privilege, and under-privilege, are all looped. Rules of interaction, norms, and taboos, are all looped. You have to escape the loops to recognize this.

The loops are internally self-maintaining as long as no competing loops threaten their internal integrity. Only when someone enters the loop from outside the loop can they threaten it. Only where the social reality conflicts at some important level with the primary reality of the real world, will a crisis occur in which the social reality can begin to reveal cracks. It is usually only in times of crisis that organizations of all forms are forced to reform. They are forced to approximate the primary reality more closely, to 'converge'. They are forced to import more primary reality into their social reality. The social reality is compelled to become more and more primary or scientific. The social actors are compelled to engage in more reasoning, and abandon some reason(s)ing. Sometimes they are too stubborn and inflexible. The loop simply dis-integrates. The loop is a three dimensional sphere. If it cannot adapt itself to the primary reality, TROONATNOOR, then this bubble will simply burst.

The unreliability of 'goodwill'

The experience of feeling 'Goodwill' towards someone or something is merely a discrete event. The master feels 'goodwill' towards their slave, because the slave is producing value for them, so of course they will be well-disposed toward them. If you are a pop star or famous actor you will feel goodwill towards your fans, the ones who provide you with a lavish lifestyle. If you anticipate that someone is going to be nice to you, and provide you with some form of value, then you will be predisposed to feel positive towards them. If your children reflect positively on you, and show the world what you could have done, had you had the opportunities, then you will feel goodwill towards them. Our pets take whatever we give them and give us unconditional love in return, so we feel goodwill towards them. Unfortunately goodwill is so fleeting that it can suddenly turn to vicious ill-will.

The 'moral intention' I have been seeking, the 'goodwill' I have been looking for, does not exist as such, in terms of being a moral quantity or force. We must accept this before we can deal with what this means. It is unproductive to base a system of relations on invalid assumptions. Luckily for us morality is not a prerequisite for us to produce a system of relations that approximates how we would interact if we were indeed 'moral' creatures. What we need to promote is holistically enlightened self-interest and informed consent. Once the bulk of humanity is aware of where its true long term interests lie, it will naturally produce institutions and sets of relationships and definitions, conventions, cultures, practices, and so on, that reflect this enlightenment, or if you will, are reflexive of enlightened, holistic self-interest.

Evolution has produced this awareness within this biological unit, which refers to itself as The Philosopher of The Eden Protocols in this text, and, in everyday life, as Markus Rehbach. It is now a matter for history to retrospectively see if I can manage to 'infect' enough other 'minds' with this 'meme'.

Escaping history and human nature

Humanity always feels as if has escaped history, and is on the verge of paradise. We have all the solutions that our parents didn't have. We are superior. We know better. However history shows that every solution we find brings its own problems with it. At first we appear to have escaped history, only to find unexpected negative consequences emerging. Cars have resulted in millions of maimed and killed drivers and pedestrians. Technology has produced obesity. The availability of goods has made us slaves to credit cards. We imagine we can find technical solutions to human problems, and thus be able to escape human nature. During my APC driver training course, driving along a trail at night, in a convoy, the APC in front of me got stuck in a ditch, and needed to be towed out. So I paid close attention and imagined I could drive around whatever ditch the other APC had got stuck in. However I too got stuck. It was dark and there was no way to see how big the ditch was. This to me seems to be a good analogy for life. We imagine we can avoid the pitfalls that have befallen others, including our own parents. We imagine we can do better, and avoid the traps that caught others. We imagine somehow that we are 'atomized', outside of history, free of the usual foibles of other humans. Experience usually shocks us about our own human nature. Our responses to novel situations usually comes as a surprise. Our initial response is denial and revisionism. Most people will never honestly own human nature. They will look in the mirror and fail to see their own reflection. They will never face up to the facts about human nature. They will live in denial.

Constructing tradition and transferred authority

History must sometimes be revised to construct a fictitious continuity of the present with the past, so that the current definitions and systems of relations, and the current dominant hegemonic groups, can claim historical continuity and the transferred authority of 'the ancestors' and 'tradition'. The ancients were wise. They bequeathed us the rules governing our interactions. They were wise in granting privileges and assigning duties. The further back in a mythical time we can place them, the more authority they seem to have. At the furthest reach we end up with our 'totem-animal', our 'totem-father', our 'gods'.

The current set of relationships and definitions will be placed within the context of a long tradition. This bestows upon them greater legitimacy and authority than if their source were merely the all-too-human and fallible current leadership. The ancients were super-human, or gods, or had close contact with the gods. In the mythical past gods walked the earth, and interacted with mortals. They set down laws and rules and taboos. They determined that the priests should have the best of the best and so on. They were wise. We would do ourselves great damage were we to ignore their wisdom. They might even get angry. We don't want to risk incurring their wrath. We will make votive offerings to 'the ancestors' and respect our inherited 'traditions'. We will not risk the ultimate crime of 'impiety', the crime of showing disrespect for the taboos the ancestors, gods, and their go-betweens, the priests, had laid down.

Creation myths are constructed in which the current reflexive set of definitions and systems of relations were handed down to man from the gods or the ancients, who had closer ties to the gods than we have. In some animist societies the spirits of the land, and trees, and water and so on, taught the original humans how to behave. They taught them rituals and gave them definitions and norms, conventions, and meanings. They set the boundaries of status, privilege, power, taboos, laws, and all the norms we were to govern our human interactions by, and our interactions with the environment. This was the 'dream-time' or 'dreaming'.

Chosen people myths were produced to legitimate exclusive codes of ethics. They legitimated the exploitation, rape, murder, conquest, enslavement, genocide of, and theft from, 'other' peoples. The creation myths explain how we came to be, and how the relationships were determined by one or many god/s.

Of course sacred texts are produced which document these long ago times, and pass down this ancient wisdom. The documents seem to prove what the priests have been telling us. Of course they do. The priests wrote them, and rewrote them as it suited them. However we are caught up in the teleological loops of our inherited traditions. We assume that the sacred texts are inviolable and incorruptible. What the current priests say is consistent with what the sacred texts say, and sometimes prophesied. Inside the loop this is very convincing. We will detail how such teleologies are constructed, and why they can be so convincing, later in 'Religion'.

The people in power get to decide which texts are sacred, and which histories are official. They can decide which creation myths will be official dogma. As George Orwell warned us in '1984', 'he who controls the present, controls the past, controls the future'. Those currently in power will censor and edit history. They can reconstruct and revise history. They can simply fabricate history. They can produce a seamless continuity between their definitions, meanings, and powers and privileges, and the distant past. They will invoke the authority of 'tradition'. They will invoke the authority of 'the god/s'.

The appeal to tradition has been, well, traditional. It has traditionally been a powerful tool for legitimating the current status-quo. This is why the privileged seek to promote respect for tradition. This is what is meant by 'conservatism', the desire to maintain the systems of definitions and relations that reproduce the status-quo and its distributions of costs and benefits, burdens and privileges.

In more enlightened, nominally scientific and democratic societies, the status-quo is merely defined as 'the best of all possible worlds'. Appeals are made to reason rather than tradition. However the specious sophistry employed is often more reason(s)ing than reasoning.

An interdependent system of ideologies, belief systems, assumptions, popular language formulations, relationships of power and privilege, and public opinion, produce seamless teleological loops of internal consistency, re-iteration, and reflexivity. The teleological loop is exclusive, and hegemonic. You live inside it. When you look outwards your gaze is reflected back inwards. Every time you try to interrogate your loop your attentions are deflected internally. Everything is consistent inside the loop. It appears faultless and seamless. You have to escape the loop to recognize this. In fact there are a multitude of 'loops' which together form a 'sphere' called the dominant hegemonic social reality, which you will have to escape.

The problem of most cost-benefit analyses is that costs can often be displaced onto others

All decisions have implications for others, what economists call 'externalities'. The problem with cost-benefit analyses which most people fail to recognize is that as costs can be displaced onto others, those making decisions can focus on the benefits they will receive. I have discussed elsewhere how many World Bank financed schemes benefited only a few corrupt politicians and business men. They enjoyed the benefits of their decisions, while the majority of the population bore the costs. At first glance we would tend to assume that a huge, multi-billion dollar scheme must make sense, otherwise why would they have invested in it. What we forget is that those who build the scheme, who give out the contracts and so on, all benefit personally. Others will pay the costs. It is the same for war. A few big business interests and their 'puppet' politicians make a fortune, while the taxpayer foots the bill, in terms of death, destruction, and money. The problem is, that the problem is someone else's problem. For this reason many decisions are made which are indefensible on holistic cost-benefit terms.

How much inequality would people chose if given genuine holistically informed consent?

Would we prefer to risk being randomly born next time around into poverty and exploitation, in order to keep open the possibility of one day, in some life, enjoying the possibility of obscene wealth, privilege, and luxury?

If we had been given holistically informed consent, the opportunity to choose the level of justice and fairness in this world before being born, then whatever we do experience is fair and just, as we had chosen inequality. If we had been denied this opportunity, then I am offering it to you now. The choice you make now will make whatever you do experience in your next random incarnation fair or otherwise. If you chose to behave opportunistically in this life, then you will inherit the world such behavior produces next time around. In this case any injustice you suffer in this life, and the next lives, will be deserved. You had chosen injustice as your principle.

I am offering you the chance to produce a world defined by justice. Right now, you know what hand you have been dealt. You are aware of your holistic inheritance. You know whether you have been dealt a good hand or not. You know whether you are in a position to take advantage of inequality, or whether you are likely to be a victim of it. Your notion of what is just will simply reflect your perceived self-interests.

The justice that underlies this universe relates to our ignorance of our future lives. You may be optimistic of your chances, based on the hand you have been dealt, your holistic inheritance. You may flippantly claim to be all for competition and 'winner take all'. However this is rubbish. Your attitude is simply a reflection of your positive holistic inheritance. What you will need to do is put yourself in the position of those with poorer holistic inheritances. Only then will you be able to imagine how your future lives, your future holistic inheritances, and life chances, might look. Only then will you be able to give your informed consent to the reproduction and exploitation of inequality.

And consider this. Has anyone ever employed their holistic inheritances, their superior talents, intelligence, beauty, sex-appeal, physical strength, wealth, education, political connections, and windfalls in any large part to the greater good? People imagine they are more generous and considerate than they really are. We imagine that if we were rich, we would behave differently than those who are already rich.

You have the opportunity now, of determining what holistic inheritance you are likely to inherit in your future lives. You have the chance to determine whether the world will be defined by justice, or the reproduction and exploitation of inherited inequality. You have the chance to increase the odds that you will be born healthy, intelligent, and attractive, into a family that loves you. You have the chance to determine what sort of society you will be born into.

In the long run, we are likely to be the victims, rather than the beneficiaries, of injustice

My optimal ethic generator, the article of faith of random, eternal new-birth, would eliminate the possibility to 'shift' costs onto 'others'. Ultimately, we inherit the world we produce. We will inherit the longer-term costs of our decisions, even as we enjoy the benefits in this life. And ultimately such thinking, a focus on eternity, would motivate people to pay much greater attention to the longer-term. If, in the long term, we are not dead, then we have a real motive to consider the longer term in all our decision making processes. If we have a statistical likelihood of being the victim of the actions we are today the beneficiaries of, we are less likely to perpetuate, to re-produce, injustice. The other we displace our current costs on, will likely be us, in our next lives. Thus opportunism would cease to be attractive. We would demand more principled, just, fair, and transparent systems of relations and definitions. We would have a motive to seek a fairer, more just, and more transparent world. We would want to know the truth about TROONATNOOR.

Suspending judgment

It is reasonable and necessary in many cases to assume various key points in an argument to be true, in order to see where the arguments take us. The assumptions will become compelling or otherwise to us in relation to the totality, the 'whole' of the argument, in its entirety. Suspending judgment is a subtle art. We must be ready to dismiss assumptions when they are not compelling in relation to the totality of the arguments, but willing to suspend judgment up to this point. We must wait until we have reached the peaks and have a holistic overview of the entire argument.

Dogma and propaganda

By insisting on your own favorite dogma, you validate dogma in general. You deny reason the power to transform individuals and societies. Communist dogma, is Catholic dogma, is Republican dogma, is Marxist dogma, is Nazi dogma. Dogma makes zombies of those who subscribe to dogma. The norm of dogma in our society is the fundamental principle behind the brutal and vicious large scale social 'actions' throughout history, and the more dull, subtle hegemonic belief systems which constitute the mundane backdrop to everyday life. The victims of the hegemonic systems of relations passively re-produce the relations, definitions, and systems of their own victimization.

The social acceptance of any dogma provides a fertile breeding ground for all sorts of problematic, destructive, sub-optimal beliefs and behaviors. You can't keep your pet convenient, comfortable dogma without being responsible for the consequences of every other dogma in the world. Propaganda finds willing believers as we are happy to believe that we are superior, the chosen ones, that we are 'morally' better than the 'others', whether the others are defined by their religion, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, or sexual orientation.

Our implicit anthropocentrism

Our frustration with the world, when things are not convenient for us, when they don't go as we want, is the greatest expression of our implicit assumption or attitude that the world exists to serve our needs. We take things personally. We become angry with what we believe are inanimate objects. We become angry with the world, as if it cares what we think about it. More metaphysical people could argue that this 'reveals' an unconscious awareness that in fact nothing is inanimate, that everything is alive, and that we made the world ourselves, or something else made it for us. Otherwise how could you explain our automatic emotional response to its failure to serve our interests? This is the sort of 'must' arguments the meta-physicians tend to resort to.

Moby Dick's Captain Ahab is an example of anthropocentrism. How dare an animal, while struggling for its life, injure a human. This challenges man's place at the center of the universe. It is against God's order. This order, this anthropocentrism, must be restored. All the laws of nature demand it. Animals were 'created' for us to use as means to our ends. It is in dying that they serve their purpose. Remember Ahab is hunting for profit, rather than survival, while the whale is fighting for its life. If we argue teleologically, as functionalists do, then it would be valid to say that we, humans, were created to be habitats for the micro-organisms and parasites that live in and off us. They are the top of the food chain, and not us. So much for anthropocentrism. Impiety and noble lies

We recognize that our own nature is not to be considerate to others interests when they conflict with our motives or desires. We accept being managed as we fear what others would do in the absence of such management. These fears are based on our honest recognition of our own impulses, and what we might do, if we could get away with it. Even though we are projecting our own motives onto others, as we share the same human nature, these projections are more or less reliably valid. Most of us realize what we have to lose if civilization falls apart. Most of us benefit from law and order. We are aware that we could not, alone, restore the benefits we enjoy as members of a society. Only those with nothing, and no hope of every attaining anything, have nothing to lose by the breakdown of law and order. It is such people who desire anarchy. If they cannot have anything, why should anyone else? Revolutions only emerge when a relatively large proportion of society falls into this last category. Noble lies were invented to inhibit this group from acting on their jealous, hostile impulses, based on a fear of hell. However the beneficiary classes could not resist inventing more lies to serve their own interests. Some lies do have a noble character. However most of the taboos invented by religion merely served the interests of the beneficiary classes, rather than serving the noble interests of law, order, and society. Society functions perfectly well with euthanasia, masturbation, homosexuality, and scientific principles of skepticism.

What is sacred?

No building, rite, sacrament, clothing, prayer, place, food, or drink is any more sacred than any other. What makes anything sacred is the intention behind its existence. A church is no more sacred than a public toilet. It is the motivation behind the building and maintenance of the public toilet or church that makes it sacred. The intention to serve others, to act in their interests is the only truly 'sacred' thing in the universe.

The act of cleaning a toilet is more holy and sacred than the act of reading scriptures in a cathedral, if the intention is to serve others. The only sacred, holy thing is service to others, and the intention to serve others, rather than ourselves. Cleaning the floor or preparing a simple meal for others is much more holy an occupation than being a cardinal. Only where the cardinal approaches his work with the same humility as the cleaner can he claim to have any 'holiness'. It is the intention motivating an act which defines it as holy or sacred, and not the 'grandness' of the act, or the outcomes.

True spiritualism stresses the sacred quality of all acts intended to serve others, rather than ourselves. This was the message of Jesus, Buddha, and the Hindu teachers. The small dilapidated rooms where the poorest are cared for are much holier and sacred than the Cathedrals in Koln or Prague. Jesus called upon all true Christians to treat 'the lowest among them as if they were Jesus himself'. What use could a 'god' that created all the glories of nature have for a few stones piled on top of each other to the glory of man himself? What use could 'god' have for 'theolatriy' and 'churcheology'. Man worships himself in his religions, producing gods in his own image, and then masturbatorily idolizing himself. See "Religion" for details. God is a puppet dictator put in power by men to do their bidding. They call him 'lord' so others will do the same, and do his bidding. Of course when we do this god's bidding, we are really doing their bidding. This is the principle of religion, the principle of power, that Plato makes clear in Republic. See 'Convergences' for details.

Dis-integration, dis-stress, and dis-ease

Denying yourself or others their authenticity, their 'integrity' or 'wholeness', produces a dis-integration of their 'whole' which leaves them prone to pathogens, to heart disease, to heart attacks, not to mention nervous breakdowns, migraines, dysfunctional behaviors and often 'crippling' emotions.

We act as if a person can lie all day, act differently to how they feel all day, say yes when they mean no, smile when they want to scream, and not suffer because of it. Even the custom of answering 'how are you' with 'fine, thanks' must have an impact, when you are feeling overwhelmed, frustrated, depressed, and worn out.

Unfortunately we have inherited a 'Cartesian-dualism'. We define the body and the mind as distinct and separate things.

This represents a fracturing of the whole of the person into separate parts. This is an attack on the wholeness, the 'holiness' of the person. Healing is necessary, to make the person whole once more. We must encourage and allow authenticity, in order to promote 'wholeness' and ease.

We must escape the 'Double Bind' which anthropologist Gregory Bateson argues can account for most schizophrenia, or 'schisms' of the personality or 'mind'. We must allow people to be authentic. We must validate authentic feelings, emotions, and experiences.

We must validate the fact that there are problems, and address them where possible. Otherwise we are producing schizophrenia, we are producing a pathological disintegration of the whole. People need to be allowed to be 'real', and to have their real experiences validated. This is the first step to improving our personal and social health.

People must be allowed, encouraged, provoked, trained and educated to express themselves, and not be encouraged or forced to wear masks. We need to encourage people to let down their guards, to take off their masks and disguises. We need to provide safe and non-threatening conditions to encourage this. We must lead by example, to show that it is safe to do so. We need a cultural revolution. Say what you think and feel. You have a right to dissent. You have a right to rage, to disagree, to express disappointment and to tell the emperor he is naked. You have a right to the truth. You have a right to authenticity, to being healed, to being whole. This is what is holy, not bricks and stained glass and purple robes and liturgy. The truth, reality, is healing, it makes us whole, it is holy. Authenticity is truth, it heals, it is holy.

Other people's problems

Other people's problems will ultimately become yours. The H.I.V or hepatitis infected person's problem becomes yours when you step on their used needle. The underpaid, over-stressed, frustrated, exhausted, distracted shift-worker or alcoholic involves you in road rage incidents and accidents. Thus you become a victim of their problems. Those with nothing to lose are keen on revolution and war, and will drag you into it with them. Terrorism is a deliberate strategy to get you to pay attention and care about someone else's problems, by threatening you. We tend to be indifferent to other people's problems until we suffer too. Everything is interconnected. Don't imagine that other people's problems will not become yours.

Spinning vices as virtues

People, like Plato, 'spin' their fear as a virtue. Those who fear taking risks pretend they are less greedy than speculators. They take safe jobs and then claim their motivation was to serve the public interest. They fear they have no talent to compete in a competitive world, so they 'believe' in equality. They have no capital, and so they are 'against' capitalism. They have no relative superiority to exploit, so they are 'against' exploitation. Because our holistic inheritances are usually made up of a combination of strengths and weaknesses, our 'values' tend to be 'inconsistent'. Thus people will be for particular forms of exploitation and inequality, while claiming to be against inequality in general. These 'values' are not based on 'principle' other than that of 'opportunism'. Most people's values are merely opportunistic attempts to adapt the world to their individual holistic inheritance. Change their inheritance, and suddenly their apparent 'values' change. We inherit our 'values' along with the vested interests reflexive of our holistic inheritance, and the benefits and costs that we anticipate we stand to enjoy or suffer as a consequence of any particular system of relations and definitions. Hence we have a complex system of definitions and relations. Our legal systems are complex. They are particular. They deal with particular cases, to avoid any principles being universally applied. The legal codes that result are hence inconsistent. This is no accident. It is intentional. Our legal codes reflect the attempts of competing interests to assert their own specific, narrow, interests. If they were based on principles, they would be simple, consistent, coherent, and not require any specialist knowledge to 'interpret' or assert.

Beware of Plato's and Mores

Most people would leave a safe cage for the interesting opportunities of a life of risk outside the cage. Or? In many ways people do exchange risks for the benefits of the various 'cages' that make up society. People take safe government jobs, and safe marriages, at significant opportunity cost. Those with the least alternative opportunities have the least opportunity costs, and so they will attempt to define the 'safe' 'reasonable' bet as 'morally' superior. They have little to lose. However they are then jealous of those who are willing to take risks in order to satisfy their more passionate desires. It is not enough that they get the best option available to themselves, they also demand that others renunciate their more attractive options, simply so that they do not have to deal with their jealousy and envy. Therefore beware of Plato's bearing 'noble lies' and More's offering 'Utopias'. Their motives are less than noble, no matter how well they have repressed them, and will deny them. They will present their arguments in 'moral' or 'intellectual' terms. However all they are doing is acting on their selfish emotional impulses, and these are motivated more by jealousy and envy, and self-interest, than any 'common good'.

Denying others what you deny yourself

People who have 'chosen' stability, family, and security, often express envy and jealousy towards those who 'opted' for more excitement, sexual satisfaction, and accepted greater risks. Of course they are more jealous of the few who were successful. People have a tendency to value what they don't have, and take for granted what they do have. Those who feel they made the wrong choice, are jealous of others who appear to have done better. They resent any benefits others enjoy, and tend to forget the risks they took and continue to take in order to enjoy them. Public servants with secure jobs complain that a few others who do not appear to be any smarter or more talented have been successful. They fail to recognize all those who barely survive. They fail to recall that risks work both ways. Those people enjoying the security of marriage, but feel they have made a mistake, resent those who did not make this mistake. Most criticism is merely jealousy. People don't want others to enjoy what they do not enjoy. They will criticize those who enjoy sexual freedom in 'moral' terms, when all they are doing is attempting to deny others what they enjoy, simply because they have denied themselves the same pleasures. Grant power to laws, positions, and institutions, rather than people

Humans are fallible. Self-deception, including concerning motives, is human nature, as is spin-doctoring. We cannot trust people with power. It is human nature for them to use it to further their own interests. Therefore we must invest power in offices rather than people. This will help eliminate the subjective and personal from the equation. We must grant principles and not legalistic weasel-words power. We must ensure transparency. We must base our decisions on compelling arguments, rather than the emotional appeal of persuasive rhetoric. We must make arguments impersonal and objective, to avoid people making an emotional investment in any position, and fearing losing face by admitting they are wrong. We need to make decisions when we can do so with cool, calm, equanimity, rather than leaving decisions to be made under crisis situations.

Habituation would suggest sharing, rather than private ownership, as the optimal

Habituation means that the longer you possess or experience most things, the less satisfaction you will derive from them. This represents a form of waste, when a person has exclusive access to a resource, and yet derives little satisfaction from it. Habituation applies equally to a sexy, beautiful woman or a fast car. The optimal response would be car-sharing. Today some entrepreneurs are already offering car-clubs, where people who pass an initial screening process can pay a joining fee, and then rent one of many luxury cars. This way they share the costs and the satisfactions. Of course the same issues apply to marriage as to individual possession of luxury cars. It can be argued that a woman's beauty and sex appeal is wasted on just one man, who will inevitably become habituated to her, and take her charms for granted. She will not be able to inspire the same sexual lust or romantic tenderness in her partner after 36 months, that she did during the bloom of their romance and love-life. In this way we are wasting a precious resource. Of course I anticipate an alternate version from most women. In any case, sadly, most people have only one referent in their cost-benefit analyses, and that referent is themselves. They do not care what satisfactions they deprive others of. And most women merely use romantic and sexual feels to ulterior ends, and once they have successfully employed their charms towards these ends, they are satisfied.

Laws getting people to act as if they were rational

Laws, in the best instances, aim to produce more optimal habits (Greek Ethos=habits=Ethics), and therefore to encourage people to behave as they would if they in fact were rational, logical, reasonable, considerate of others, intelligent, and holistically enlightened. Justice is more about disciplining opportunistic impulses than anything else. The aim of the law is to get us to act as if we were capable of inhibiting our immediate impulses in order to serve their own, and our collective, longer-term interests. Laws, such as those requiring the wearing of seat-belts, are based on science and statistics. Of course when seat-belts were first introduced most people refused to use them. They were first encouraged to do so, via persuasive argument. This failed, and so the State had to resort to legal regulations.

As people still stubbornly refused to comply, punitive laws were introduced, and actively policed. People were fined, and lost 'points' from their license for failing to comply with the laws. This had led to a massive reduction in fatalities and serious injuries. The problem is that most people will never be involved in an accident, and therefore they see no need to take precautions. However the State takes a holistic view. Statistically millions of people will have accidents. Seen from this holistic perspective, it makes sense to compel everyone to wear seat-belts.

The aim of laws is to make seat-belt use an automatic habit. Remember the origin of the term ethics is the Greek Ethos, meaning habit. Ideally undesirable behaviors take on the emotional compulsion of a taboo. Taboos, like laws, are intended to get people to act as if they were capable of sacrificing short-term satisfactions with an eye on the longer-term risks and opportunities. Taboos are often reinforced by socializing people into internalizing superstitious fears and other 'noble lies'. Today we find fines and legal consequences effective enough, without any need for recourse to religious superstitions such as fear of hell, or 'bad karma'.

The sub-conscious as a convenient fiction?

People behave badly and have bad intentions and desires. They wish to hurt others, to do harm, to take advantage of others, and to use others as means to their own ends. People act on their desires. People wish to have their cake and eat it too. People want to be able to think well of themselves, and of humanity in general, even though the facts of human nature and behavior would challenge this definition. People seek to 'reconcile' reality with what they want to be true. We may re-produce the concept of 'the sub-conscious' to 'reconcile' a positive self-definition with the reality of our natures. If people are behaving 'sub-consciously', then they are not 'morally' accountable for their actions. It is their 'subconscious' that is doing bad things, not them. 'Moral' accountability and culpability is therefore conveniently denied. The reality is therefore synthetically reconciled with what people want to be true, reconciled with what they like to think about themselves and humanity. This brings us back to dis-integration, the fracturing of the 'whole', and disease. When we deny a part of our true natures, we are committing a violence upon ourselves, dis-integrating our whole, destroying the integrity of our organism. This said, Freud's arguments are pretty compelling. Read them in 'Convergences'.

Freedom of speech

Walter Lippmann and Jeremy Bentham, argue that freedom of speech rightly entails an obligation to present and consider the many sides of any argument. Freedom of speech in itself merely allows for a monologue. Presenting one side of an argument represents a huge degree of 'selection' and 'bias'. For people to be able to make informed decisions, and to give their informed consent, people need to be aware of all sides of an argument. Freedom of speech must entail an obligation on the part of the speaker to submit to interrogation. The freedom of speech should be replaced by the 'obligation to dialog'. Freedom of speech is most valuable when it entails an obligation on the part of speakers to listen.

All forms of media should be compelled to provide a 'balanced' presentation of all news and current affairs. Of course I am not referring to a 'Fox' sort of 'balanced' presentation. Broadcasters like Fox in the U.S, and radio presenters such as John Laws in Australia, profit from pandering to a particular audience. They merely reflect a 'popular' opinion and type of thinking, feeling, and reacting back onto a target audience, thereby affirming and validating that audience, and gaining their loyalty in return. This is what is often referred to as 'populism'. It is how Moses maintained his popularity, and how Hitler gained power.

I can't help but note the absurdly incomprehensible comment recently made by Fox 'news' commentator O'Reilly, that George Bush is doing in Iraq 'exactly what Jesus would do'. One of the sad facts about Fox's completely biased coverage and commentary of the war is Fox's popularity. Fox has a huge audience. This has had the corollary effect of motivating other broadcasters to become more populist in their own coverage of the Iraq war, in order to maintain their own ratings and advertising revenues. This has produced a sort of 'self-censorship' on the part of even broadcasters who are politically opposed to the Republican administration's policies, including the war in Iraq. They are telling the people only what they want to hear.

This is an example of how the dominant powers gain a hegemonic position for their definitions. Even those 'independent' interests opposed to the dominant hegemonic interests must adapt and become compatible with the dominant hegemonic interests if they are to survive. They are bound by the over-arching hegemonic systems of relations that require ratings and advertising revenues, and profits for shareholders. As such they must at a fundamental level act in ways that reinforce the dominant hegemonic definitions and systems of relations even where they are opposed to these dominant hegemonic interests.

Cross ownership of large corporations means that a media company will not report things that might adversely affect companies which its boards of directors sit on, or that have common share-holders and management. Few people realize how much 'cross ownership' exists. A few directors sit on the boards of directors of a large number of companies. There appear to be many companies all acting independently and in in competition, but this is often a false impression. Companies, their share-holders, and their directors, are often closely linked through such cross-ownership.

The editors of television and radio programs, and of newspapers, are therefore often under great pressure from their owners, share-holders, and boards of directors, to pander to their audience's and reader's prejudices and biases. Further, the costs of true investigative journalism are high, as are the costs of legal representation when guilty parties invariably sue for libel and damages. The costs of defending a journalist or media outlet in legal action can be prohibitive enough to prevent many really newsworthy items from being investigated in the first place, let alone presented.

There are therefore many reasons to doubt that 'freedom of speech' exists. The government can stop the media reporting on the war in Iraq directly. The dominant hegemonic interests the current U.S administration is a representative of can also, through more unobtrusive means, prevent real news from being investigated and reported.

It can produce a particular bias, and make this bias hegemonic. It no longer registers as bias at all. It becomes the taken for granted 'social reality'.

The value of reading 'junk'

It is perhaps worthwhile to read junk, with a critical mind, as it can stimulate, provoke, challenge, and prepare us for similar 'junk' arguments in real life. We can anticipate conventional responses to our compelling arguments, and prepare strategies in advance to compensate for them. We can avoid making the same simple, common, easily made errors in reasoning. We can challenge assumptions in peace and quiet, without risking 'losing face'. And quite often we will find elements of lucidity and truth in the most erroneous and absurd of arguments. We can avoid the vanity of 'noble lies', of convincing ourselves that our lies are justified and in the interests of those we will lie to. We can avoid the traps of seeking the 'transferred authority' of revelations from angels or gods, possession by spirits, or any other form of superstition. We will learn that it is best to admit to what we do not, and probably cannot know. It is best to be practical while keeping our minds open to being contradicted in our beliefs. In fact we might go so far as to say that true vision owes its power to standing in the shoes of idiots and liars, as much as it owes its reach to standing on the shoulders of giants.

The illusion of the noble savage ends in contempt for humanity for the idealistic revolutionary

All revolutionaries become dictators as soon as they recognize the realities of human nature. They come to despise those they initially idealized as 'noble savages'. They learn the ugly truth that the 'victims' they sought to lead to the Promised Land are far from the noble savages with good intentions and natures merely corrupted by 'the system' they lived under. In fact it is the people, not the system, which is the problem. They are the reason the system is how it is. Their motives and actions ultimately define the system. They are not the 'blank slates' that the revolutionary can write on, re-write, re-educate, re-socialize, and 'save'. They have endemic instincts which make conflict endemic.

They have conflicting desires and motives. Their potential is fixed and cannot simply be improved by education. Thus the revolutionary leader, like the idealist, learns to despise those they sought to liberate. They discover that the masses never shared their ideals. They merely wanted revolution to gain a 'reshuffling of the cards'. They had no 'moral' motives. Even worse, the masses are not keen to worship their revolutionary leaders, and to sacrifice their own interests in the interests of the revolution, or for some 'public' interest. Their interests rarely extend further than their own family. The victims are no better than the perpetrators. They never wanted to abolish exploitation and inequality, they merely wanted to trade places with their exploiters.

Illusions of goodwill and noble savages last until they are tested

We feel goodwill towards others until we realize these others exploit our good nature, and use us as means to their ends. Humans are of mostly instrumental, rather than affective value to each other. The affective value is limited to a few relations and friends. It extends no further. And even in these few close relationships, it is extremely limited. Few people dare 'test' their friendships by becoming 'a friend in need'. Our goodwill is based on naive assumptions that other humans feel goodwill towards us. Experience has taught me I have been very naive. The only reliable motive is self-interest. Any proposed system of relations that assumes goodwill and noble savages is doomed to failure. And the idealists who stubbornly refuse to accept TROONATNOOR tend to take it out on the people who fail to live up to their expectations. In reality these idealists also overestimate their own goodwill towards others. They live in denial of their own human nature. Once in power they justify all their own privileges and benefits as legitimate. Find a political leader who has not taken advantage of their power to serve their own interests, and those of their family and friends.

Now for some Zen

Surely there is a Zen koan in this! Zen master to student: Where does a circle start? I think the only valid answer would be 'when'. Is a koan profound if there is no-one to hear it? Surely the probability wave function of the particles that make up Master's big stick won't collapse unless I observe it? How then does he still manage to 'whack' with it when I am not looking? Koans originate in the sayings and doings of sages and legendary figures. Sometimes they are designed to free the mind from 'rational' thought. The whack of a stick on the ground may be used to 'shock' the student into a higher state of awareness. However verbal answers or appropriate gestures are expected in response to the Master's koan. The Zen student's response to their teacher's or master's koans will indicate whether the student has grasped what the koan 'means', thereby demonstrating their insight (Kensho) and enlightenment on a particular point.

Most masters claim a direct authority, coming from their founding Zen Master Bodhidharma (circa 6 CE) in a direct line of master-student 'Dharma transmission'. Zen is considered to be 'A special transmission outside the scriptures, Not founded upon words and letters; By pointing directly to [one's] mind, It lets one see into [one's own true] nature and [thus] attain Buddha-hood.' This is reflected in Bodhidharma's interaction with the Chinese Liang Dynasty Emperor Wu (527 CE), a devout Buddhist. The emperor asked Bodhidharma, "How much karmic merit have I earned by ordaining

Buddhist monks, building monasteries, having Sutras copied, and commissioning Buddha images?' Bodhidharma answered, 'None.' Wu was not pleased, and refused any further contact with the Zen founder, who went on to spend the next 9 years staring at a wall in meditation.

As I've noted elsewhere, after the Buddha's death, his teachings were corrupted to form a religion. Once you have 'religion', you tend to lose the wisdom of the philosophy in favor of statues, icons, dogma, and temples. None of these have anything to do with the spiritual teachings of Siddhartha the teacher. He apparently had expressly stated his opposition to such things being done in his name. Of course, like all 'religious' founders, we can't say much for certain about him with any sort of real historical accuracy. As someone said, 'history is merely the lies we agree on'. Read more in 'Religion'

Changing levels of composition

. Join the dot! The point is that the dot is made up of smaller particles. It is only defined as a thing in itself by the conventional human level of composition we adopt when defining it. When observed from above, the participants in the Olympic closing ceremony could easily have been confused for cells in a single organism. If you were unaware of the holistic context, the choreography, the motivations of the actors, the significance their actions had for them, and the purpose the whole 'show', you could easily fail to realize that you were observing the choreographed, integrated actions of many discrete, individual organisms. We should keep this in mind when we observe the world around us. Imagine how we might appear to observers that are millions of times larger than us, when we observe things millions of times smaller.

Towards a life (and death) affirming philosophy

The Zen master will teach us to be a gold sun in a clear blue sky. Zen teaches us to disregard the 'noise and clouds' of our worries, fears, ambitions, and desires as distractions. This of course is a valuable meditation, which can free us from excessive worries and dis-stress, and allow us to concentrate on the most important epiphenomena of our lives. It is also an essential tool of the philosopher, that of philosophical indifference.

However, should we view life itself, then, as a mere distraction, an obstacle to a higher form of existence? Should we be indifferent to life itself? This view would lead us to dismiss the quest to eliminate earthly Suffering. Suffering would be defined as a mere product of attachment to transient, impermanent things. According to such 'wisdom', we can only transcend suffering, by becoming indifferent to both it and pleasure. This approach would define the quest for optimizing our life here and now as counter-productive. It is a rejection of life, rather than an affirmation.

It is similar in its effects to the Judeo-Christian 'vale of tears' definition of the world. This 'wisdom' directs us to focus on 'spiritual' goals, rather than on this world. It defines the pursuit of worldly pleasure as evil, even sinful. The goal of such 'spirituality' is to attain 'salvation' from this world.

It is clear that most religious dogma, practice, ritual, and corporate organization has nothing to do with the prophets. Neither Jesus nor Buddha would be pleased with what has become of their moral philosophy. None of the paraphernalia of Buddhism and Christianity have 'moral'-philosophical underpinnings. They are merely politically motivated to appeal to humankind's love of ritual, and our superstitious nature. I can't see how anyone could consider Moses a prophet. If Moses was a prophet, then so was Adolf Hitler.

However we should be careful not to throw out the baby with the bathwater. Meditation, for instance, brings us to concentrate on the present, to actually experience the present. All too often we are looking back in anger, or regret, or longing, or overwhelmed by anticipation or fear of the future, and fail to experience the present.

When it comes to babies, even Moses and Hitler had some insights and good ideas. Discarding eugenics just because Hitler adopted race-based criteria for his eugenics would be the equivalent of discarding Moses commandment against murder (of course defined very narrowly re: don't kill fellow Jews, but anyone else is fair game for murder, enslavement and rape) simply because Moses was a genocidal national Zionist. In any case, the disparagement of eugenics due to its Nazi associations is disingenuous. People who argue something disingenuously, remember, do not believe what they are arguing, but are merely using the argument as an instrumental means to their ends. Anti-eugenicists set up the Nazi's as their 'straw man'.

Of course we are historical entities. Our experience of the present is made up of an anticipation of the future and a reflection on the past. This is what gives us our sense of continuity of personality, of self, and our main source of meaning. Of course memory and anticipation are double edged swords. Often we wish we could forget, and escape our anxiety for the future. Of course positive memories and positive expectations for the future enrich our lives, and provide the hope and motivation to overcome daily challenges.

Spiritual teachings seek a focus on the moment to 'free' us from this association with the physical, and the 'attachment' to it. By existing in the moment, we escape our 'self'. The 'illusion' of self is constructed of memories and aspirations. The attachment to the self is constructed of desires. The illusion of things as enduring and real is constructed. When we live in the moment, without memories or 'projections' into the future, we are left with the real substance of existence, which is epi-phenomenal. This is the true spiritual aim of meditation.

However if you wish to optimize your life experience, and not simply 'escape' from its suffering, which is a product of attachment to impermanent, insecure things, then meditation, and focusing more on the present, can enrich the present by allowing us to more fully experience it, to nurture and live the moments of our lives.

By focusing on our present experience we are less likely to make absent minded mistakes, and to miss the opportunities for positive life experiences that continually emerge around us.

We must constantly remind ourselves of the difference between being there, and really being there. It was only after being a tourist in other countries that I started actually seeing how interesting my own 'home' actually was. Being a tourist can remind us to look, to be here, to be more aware of our surroundings. As we drive everywhere by the same routes, focused on where we are going, and hopefully on the traffic conditions, we fail to notice where we are.

I had had low self-esteem and was pretty low generally as a child. I looked mostly at the ground in front of me. I did find money, but I missed a lot. I didn't even notice the huge oil refinery stacks not far from where I had lived in Rosehill until I came back from overseas as a young adult. In Seven Hills, where we had moved to during my high school years, I had failed to notice how mountainous and often scenic the landscape was. I had described it as pretty flat to relations in Germany! I hadn't noticed how steep some of the terrain was in Parramatta, until I noticed one stormy afternoon, while waiting to pick up a friend, Paula, from Harris Park. The Great Western Highway at Parramatta climbs up pretty mountainous terrain. I had always wanted to see such terrain. I got to see it in Bali, and South Korea, but had failed to notice how mountainous parts of Sydney were, and Parramatta, and even Blacktown.

When we are 'tourists' we have our 'tourist-eyes' turned on. We are looking to be impressed, and are not disappointed. When we are 'over there' we are aware. We are switched on for all manner of wonderful, novel, interesting, charming, 'authentic', even 'extraordinary' experiences. We define home as mundane, and fail to look, or are too busy looking at the traffic conditions. Friends come to visit and tell us how beautiful everything is where we live.

Walk or ride a bike somewhere you normally drive, and take a look around. When you are waiting in line or at a traffic light, expect to find something interesting, and look around you and you probably will. Don't define the everyday as not worthy of your attention. You are doing it and yourself a real violence. Drive, or preferably walk or ride, a different way to work or shopping every day. 'Discover' your local neighborhood. I found Lamas, and amazing gardens, and unexpected vistas, and creeks, and birds, and flower gardens, and wonderful trees. I bet you will too.

Sadly most of us, most of the time, are rushing off to some experience we are anticipating, either looking forward to or dreading. We are too rushed to take a look around and experience our own, everyday world. The little things can be quite charming and extraordinary, if we let them be, if we are open to the possibility. We miss out on a lot by living in the past and future. We miss out on most of the 'now'.

As part of our optimisation of our life experiences we must learn to accept suffering as part and parcel of this life, without going to the extremes of defining it as a virtue and 'glorifying it', or living in denial of technical or mystical 'fixes'. There is no ultimate security. The things you love most dearly can be taken away from you at any moment. We must learn to cherish our loved ones and not take them for granted. Alternatively we must be careful not to end up avoiding real intimacy for fear of having to one day part from loved ones. We must learn to master the art of moderation, and optimisation. We must learn to balance upon the golden mean.

Some people might still consider myths and illusions of gods, and eternal 'after-lives' as a psychological necessity to 'coping' with the fundamentally insecure nature of our existence, and with the predictable loss of our loved ones. However we should be careful that the same dogma that may serve us well, does not end up our cruel and arbitrary master. The same dogma that provides us with a sense of security, can also enslave us, and prolong our suffering pointlessly when our 'impermanence' manifests itself.

Our traditional 'dogmas' have done more harm than good. We must seek to rid ourselves of the dirty 'bathwater', whilst saving the baby. We must optimize our dogma. We must be careful though, not to open any Pandora's Box. We must not allow clever politicians and priests to play upon people's fears and insecurities to further their own political ambitions for power and privilege.

Ideally we would come to accept our 'impermanence', and find meaning in lives and relationships that were intrinsically satisfying and rewarding. Most likely it is merely our 'personalities' that are impermanent, and it is only

our 'ego' that fears annihilation. Most likely we are 'eternal' forms of awareness. And if we are not, then death can hold no fear for us, as it we will not experience it. Only dying can hold fear for us. However we have the means to make dying a painless, dignified, even 'welcome' experience. If we need a dogma to comfort us in our grief and insecurity, then there are much more 'humane' alternatives to the biblical and 'karmic' dogmas which have produced so much misery, and which have been so 'counter-productive' in terms of our optimisation of our life experience.

The same 'spiritual philosophy' must validate euthanasia. If we can't provide enough positive experience to justify this existence, then we can support those who seek to 'transcend' it, to return to 'pure consciousness' or 'oblivion', whatever the case may be. No-one should ever be compelled by any means to endure their lives as means to another's ends. That is slavery.

In any case we must come to terms with the impermanence at least of the personalities and 'selves' that we have inherited. We should learn to accept our mortality, and to embrace it. What rational person would really want to live forever, as themselves? Surely we all seek 'progress' and 'variety'. We must learn to say goodbye to our loved ones, and to accept the end of our lives when it approaches, as a mere 'transformation' from one experience to another. If there is no experience awaiting us, just oblivion, then it can hold no fear for us. Either way we must focus on making the life experiences we and our loved ones have access to, as rewarding and positive as possible, and to make ours and their 'end of life' experience as positive, dignified, and fear-and-pain free as we can.

The current forms of biblical dogma that are dominant and hegemonic are redundant and counter-productive, even violent and destructive.

The necessity of recognizing life as an end in itself

Only when we define life as an end in itself, whether we have only the one, or an infinite number of lives, do we have the starting point for an optimisation of the experience of life. Religious definitions can be counterproductive to innovation and optimisation of our life experience. If positive life experience represents sin, and a distraction from some ultimate purpose, then seeking to optimize the opportunities for such experience will be defined as counterproductive. This will not serve to encourage the optimisation of our life experience. When we are trained to be indifferent to suffering and pleasure, we will not seek out innovations to optimize our experience. We will fail to realize opportunities for positive life experience.

Only when we regain our innocence, when we interrogate dogma and free ourselves from lies, can we begin to truly experience life as an end in itself. Sadly for most people life really is a vale of tears. Religious promises of mystical powers for controlling reality, or some ultimate reward for enduring it, make religion an attractive refuge. This in itself is not essentially bad. However, escapism cannot be defined as the rightful ultimate aim of Philosophy or science. The ultimate aim of philosophy, of science, is to know the world as best we can, so that we can live in it as best we can. Religion satisfies neither of these aims when it is taken as an end in itself. Where religion is intended to produce more optimal behaviors, then it can be seen as instrumental. My optimal ethics generator represents the ultimate religious dogma in terms of its instrumentality in producing desirable behaviors and attitudes.

Evolution has empowered us to find more compelling and positive answers to the compelling questions of what we are and what we can be. Those questions and answers which have become institutionalized into the prevailing religious orthodoxies and dogmas represent earlier stages in our evolution. In the meantime some of us have evolved further. Of course social evolution always lags behind technical and personal evolution. It is the exception, the mutation, which drives evolutionary progress. The occasional genius puts their mark on the entire species.

The benefits of technological advances are usually easy to identify. Technological advances are implemented more readily than social ones, as everyone identifies with these benefits, whether master or servant. However masters are wary of social advances which will reduce their powers and privileges. They will promote technological advance, but hinder social advance. Even the servants are wary, often even fearful, of social change.

As the students of those teachers who have come before us, we have become wiser than our masters. No greater respect or accolade can be awarded a teacher than that their students surpass them in skill and wisdom. We have learned from their mistakes. We have the benefit of hindsight.

Moses' genocidal ideology of racial purity and historical destiny served his people no better than Hitler's similar program served his.

Each prophet and leader founded their religious orders based on the belief that they knew better than their predecessors. Our rejection of their dogma continues this, their, tradition. As we evolve, accumulating ever greater sophistication and complexity, our belief systems accumulate sophistication and complexity, gaining increasing correspondence with a complex environment which favors sophistication. This produces selective pressures in favor of complexity and sophistication.

Our beliefs, as 'memes' also accumulate a greater correspondence with reality. This sophistication often equates to simplicity. The processes of de-construction of the old, and the construction of the new, ultimately produce the simple, sophisticated ideas. Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) defined simplicity as the ultimate sophistication.

It is with no disrespect that we continue our predecessor's tradition of innovation. Interest groups have arisen from the institutionalization of dogmas, in the form of religions and churches. Their interests are often totally

at odds with the intentions of the prophets they claim their 'transferred authority' from. It is these hegemonic interests that define our innovations as threats.

However we do not threaten the prophet's own strivings for insights and revelations when we seek to innovate, to find deeper understandings and insights. What we threaten are the benefits that accrue to the priests and their convergent interests from 'religion'. What we threaten are the wider dominant hegemonic reflexive sets of definitions and systems of relations.

Mohamed claimed his legitimacy by appealing to a direct lineage in his prophet-hood from Abraham, to Moses, and through Jesus to himself. Now the Jews are the prime enemy of Islam, along with their protector, America. Mohamed's follower's claims that he ascended to heaven from the place of prime historical significance to the Jews was bound to produce conflict. It was meant to maintain a continuous line of transferred authority between the new prophet Mohamed, and the old 'line' of prophets. The idea to make a pilgrimage to Mecca a religious duty guaranteed the long-term economic prosperity of Mecca. It also helped form an international sense of community among the Islamic 'tribes' by bringing Muslims from around the world together. It in fact continued the pagan tradition of meteor worship in Mecca.

The Christian church claimed a continuity with Judaism, while maintaining their own superiority. It adapted the cavalcade of pagan gods in the form of saints. It adapted the pagan rituals, sacred sites, ceremonies, and traditions. It adapted the pagan holy days and superstitions. In fact it adopted the pagan 'god-men' in the form of Jesus, to whom they attributed all the 'god-man' myths and properties. Essentially, Jesus is a pagan god in new drag.

In keeping with this tradition, the new kid on the block, Islam, maintains a continuity with earlier religious dogma, but claims a higher authority as the new, and exclusive true faith. Christianity was derivative of the earlier Hellenic 'god-men'. Islam represents more a return to the Old Testament Judeo-Christian dogma than any progressive enlightenment. Mohamed was like most fundamental biblical-truth Christians. He believed that society needed to return to the biblical fundamentals of god fearing, hell fearing, submissive, after-life focused, and non vaginal-sex-with-wife, as 'sin'. One of the few innovations of Mohamed was a heaven where the martyr would be rewarded with an eternity of uncomplicated sex with an unlimited supply of submissive, coy, young, fresh, clean, undemanding, receptive but nonthreatening, nice girls. Mohamed maintained a monopoly on such sexual gratification by denying men the opportunity to live out such sexual fantasies on earth. He increased demand and controlled supply.

His intention was apparently to facilitate the adoption of mono-theism by the then animist and polytheist Arabs. He wanted to unite the Arab tribes under a single religion.

He had seen how successful and powerful the 'Christian' nations had managed to become, by uniting their various tribes under one religion, under one god, into effective 'nation-states'. He also needed to motivate his own soldiers to go on fighting against unfavorable odds.

Mohamed and Moses and the other monotheists 'killed' many gods. We modern atheists are only completing their 'progress' by doing away with the last remaining one. Modern atheists only reject 'one' god. The founders of the Judeo-Christian and Muslim 'cults' rejected many gods. So who are the greatest atheists then, us modern atheists, or the Jews, Christians, and Muslims? Well to be fair we reject 'more' gods than they do. But we are talking 'margins' here. We are only 'marginally' more atheist than those who claim to be so 'theist'. Read more in 'Religion'.

The value of keeping an open mind Vs 'final prophets' and 'the end of history'

It is true that Mohamed did promote an improvement in social justice and even the rights of women. He had married an older businesswoman at a relatively young age. Perhaps she influenced his relationship towards women in this positive way. It is ironic, however, that by setting his dogma in stone, he perhaps prevented future progress in the area of female rights. This is the irony of many social prophets. They refer to the current traditions for authority, thereby claiming a universal, timeless, authority for themselves. They do this to facilitate progress. They free their followers from earlier forms of dogma only to enslave them to new forms of dogma. They fail to foresee the possibility of, and therefore accommodate, continual innovations. They were shortsighted or arrogant in feeling that they were so enlightened and wise that no-one would ever be able to improve on them.

Mohamed improved the conditions and rights of slaves, women and children compared to how they were before Islam. He introduced an alms tax as a rudimentary form of 'social security'. He made his society more meritocratic and reduced aristocratic privileges. It is therefore ironic that his words are today being used by some interpretations of Islam, particularly those promoted by the Saudi royal family, the Iranian Imams, and the Taliban, to deny women their human rights.

It is of course debatable whether Mohamed's words really do justify the despicable sharia law. What is certain is that he opened a Pandora's Box that he couldn't control after his death. His intentions were probably good. He was, however, a product of his times and sociocultural inheritance. I am certain that he would oppose most of the regressive interpretations of his words, were he alive today. He was, for his socio-historical time, a progressive. He was, however, short-sighted or arrogant in denying that any further progress was possible. He proclaimed himself not only the only true prophet, but the last prophet.

This is often a danger with reformers and even philosophers. They arrogantly consider that they are the be-all and end-all, and that they are, like Marx, the 'final philosopher' and their philosophy the 'end of history'. Philosophy and social reform must always be an 'open-ended' question. We must avoid any arrogance or assumption that history is 'over'. We must escape the past history by not reproducing it, but we should never consider it 'completed'. We must empower ourselves to produce tomorrow's history. We must then empower tomorrow's social actors to produce history for their 'tomorrow'. We need to be able to 'escape' 'cycles' or 'reproduced loops' in history.

Renoir painted a series called 'haystacks', revealing his rejection of the notion of a constant, enduring landscape. Each painting reveals a different aspect of the simple objects. Thus he revealed that it was ridiculous to speak of a 'landscape' at all, as the image was constantly changing, or if you like, becoming. Thus he attempted to paint 'moments', rather than 'landscapes' as such. We must keep this in mind when we 'map' TROONATNOOR'. Our maps will merely reflect our current understandings. We must ensure that nothing we argue ever becomes 'dogma'. Reality itself is in a constant state of 'becoming'.

The meaning of life as an experience engine

Life is an algorithm or engine that produces experiences. Thus life is an 'experience engine'. It generates experiences. Everything you can observe is consistent with this. Evolution is the answer to the question, 'what possible meanings could life have'. It is an open-ended question. It binges on answers, and purges them of less satisfying answers. We are merely one of the products of this process. The purpose of life is experience. In

Hindu cosmology the reality we experience emerged from the universe's sense of play (Sanskrit: Lila). Buddhist and Scientology cosmology is similar. Read 'Religion' for details.

We are all parts of a single unit of awareness. In order for awareness to have experience, it must have something not-self, to experience. Thus this single unit of awareness divides itself into parts. It 'forgets' that it did this. This is 'individuation'. Each part represses its awareness of its true nature, and the true nature of the universe.

For the experiences to have any 'meaning' we must introduce relationships between each individual things. Meanings will emerge reflexively from these relationships. Thus we have a 'game environment'. Desire, satisfaction, aversion, and dis-satisfaction are all reflexive of the relationships of each to the whole which they together make up. When we produce the potential for pleasure, we automatically produce its reflexive counterpart, displeasure or pain. All meanings are reflexive of their relational counterparts.

This was the first limit to the 'freedom' of our wills. Once we begin producing a game environment, we produce limits to the freedom of our wills. To enjoy victory, we accept the possibility of defeat. To enjoy being masters, we accept the condition 'slave'. Such 'rules' and 'definitions' emerge reflexively as part of the game environment. They reflexively determine each other interactively. Thus we sacrifice freedom of will as the cost of having the opportunity to experience the game.

It is impossible to construct a satisfying game in which any of the players have free will. Try to do so and see for yourself.

When we immerse ourselves in plays, movies, books, and games, we identify with a character, a role, a position, a team, a narrative. We accept the 'arbitrary' rules which make games possible. We do so out of a sense of play, and a desire for 'experiences', for 'games'.

In this way life can be seen as a game, a game in which information is denied to us about our true nature, and that of the universe, and arbitrary rules are introduced to create game conditions.

We must of course consider how this interpretation of life could account for suffering, as, after all, games are normally designed to be enjoyed. Some might claim that the game of life was meant to be a learning experience, or an experiment. But if we started the game to generate experience, and created that ignorance for the sake of the game, then the learning is purely game stuff, and not some sort of character development. Maybe the experiment has gone wrong. Will the game be over when we know everything once more?

The most important point is that we should not let any mystical considerations color our experience and awareness of life so much that we deny the very nature of existence when it is incompatible or irreconcilable with what we wish were true, or with what we have been told is true by some authority.

Perhaps life is a training ground where we learn how to be. What are we becoming? Is this the mysterious godhead of Eastern Spiritualism? Or are we already? Are we seeking our selves, to know what we are? This is the highest spiritual pursuit of humanity. Philosophy is about finding ourselves.

Of course if my 'game' theory is right, then we merely distanced ourselves from ourselves so we could have experiences 'finding' ourselves again. People go jogging, don't they? They run off somewhere just so they can run back. It isn't hard to find 'precedents' for this sort behavior.

We may be parts of an infinitely divisible unit of awareness. However an alternative that would appeal to our sense of individuation is that we are made of the same stuff, the same primerty, but are discrete individuals. We could experience our oneness alternately as individuality, and as connection. We would experience total acceptance and approval, absolute security. We would resonate empathetically. We would share the same experience of being. This may be the bliss, the Nirvana of Buddha. This may be the godhead of the Bhavagad' Gita, and Hinduism. This may be what Leibniz meant by his 'monads'. Read more in 'Convergences'.

Remember you only experience anything when you are aware. This means that life is eternal. You only experience the moments when you are aware. If billions of years lie between such moments of awareness, you won't be aware of them. If you die and do come back in some form, then no matter what time passed between losing consciousness and becoming conscious once more, for you it will be as if you closed your eyes for a moment and then opened them again to find yourself somewhere else, someone else, maybe something else. If you don't, you won't be aware of your non-existence.

Oblivion is pure security. There is no self, therefore no fear. There is nothing to lose. There is no anxiety. There is also nothing to gain, and hence no desire. There is nothing to experience, and hence no attachment. Oblivion is the annihilation of the self, what Buddhists call 'Nirvana'. The loss of faith in the likelihood that we will ever satisfy our desires, produces Thanatos, the desire to be free from desire. Thanatos, the desire to annihilate the self, is the desire for detachment, indifference, calm, and the absence of consciousness. Read more in 'Convergences' and 'Religion'.

The meaning of life and other things that happen

The question 'what is the meaning of life?', can only validly be formulated as, what meaning does a particular life have to a particular person. Life would mean entirely different things to different referents, dependent on the referent's particular experience of life. For some referents, life means pleasure, satisfaction, enjoyment, comfort, and excitement. For others life means boredom, slavery, and suffering. Further, the meaning of particular events, say, the killing of a cow to feed a starving family, will depend on which referent's interests and experience we consider, validate, socially legitimate, and empathize with. The event means death for the cow, and a meal and life for the family.

Whether the event can be considered good or bad is a function of whose experience of the event you base your evaluation on. Events in themselves have no intrinsic 'moral' value. The ancient optimalist would milk the cow, save the family with the nutritious milk, and nurture and respect the cow. The Hindu culture optimalises in this way. The modern optimalist has a wide range of soy products to choose from, and would only bother the cow in some emergency where alternative vegan sources of nutrition became unavailable.

It is only the intention behind an act that can be ascribed 'morality'. Of course this universe is demonstrably a-moral. We use the term 'moral' to refer to an ideal that does not exist in reality. The only meaningful term is Hume's 'moral sentiment'. See 'Convergences' for details.

Perhaps the level at which our behaviors and intentions can most closely be defined as 'approximating' the ideal of morality is the intensity with which one seeks to do good, and to avoid doing harm, to everything and anything. The rigor with which one seeks to increase ones capacity for enlightened, holistic reason, and the level of transparency one submits to, and seeks to attain, are expressions of the intensity of this intention. The willingness to admit you were wrong is the greatest 'moral' challenge facing the ego. Outcomes cannot be guaranteed. Actions often have unforeseen consequences. Good intentions often have the opposite outcomes. And in any case, you could only be held 'morally' accountable for your intentions if you had free will, which you don't.

The meaning of death

The anticipation of death will have a particular meaning for each actor. For some death will mean losing all the pleasures, satisfactions, rewards, and privileges their life gave them. For others it will mean a cessation of suffering and unrewarded struggling. For some death is welcome, for others their greatest fear. Remember, only the anticipation of the process of death can be experienced, and thus have any meaning or significance to those who have been en-lightened of the dogma, the 'noble lie' of hell. Of course the death of others can bring great sorrow, loss, or alternatively, satisfaction and benefits.

Reason(s)ing and defensiveness

We are participants in hegemonic social realities which we take for granted, which we consider to be natural. We hold our beliefs to be self-evidently true. We are 'participants' as we reproduce and thereby give currency and 'power' to particular definitions by subscribing to them. We often have problematic, unchallenged assumptions underlying our views. We often have emotional investments in defining things in particular ways. We have a tendency to seek reassurance in comforting beliefs. We also have a tendency to defend beliefs or definitions which provide us with emotional and material benefits.

We tend to resist attempts to make our own beliefs and systems of definitions transparent. Such definitions may provide comfort by nominally 'reconciling' our consciences with our desires. It is of course a form of self-deceit, or denial. It is the willingness to be seduced by the lies of others. It is a willingness to co-operate with others in agendas that we ourselves, in our moments of vulnerability, may be deeply disturbed or troubled by.

Often we have practical or financial stakes in particular ways of defining things. We must ensure we do not merely manipulate language to support our assumptions and beliefs. So much argument is reason(s)ing and not reasoning. By reason(s)ing we mean the search for ways to defend beliefs, rather than to seek the truth. True reasoning is employed in seeking the truth.

Disingenuous, specious sophistry is a form of reason(s)ing. Statistics are an effective tool of reason(s)ing. Obfuscation is a powerful tool of reason(s)ing. Of course mystification, the opposite of transparency, the ultimate objective of deliberate reason(s)ing, is also the passive outcome not-conscious, or unwitting reason(s)ing.

Meaning, power, and politics

It may well be that people will actively fight against particular definitions should they become conscious or aware of them. This concept is integral to Marxist approaches to social relations. When individuals define their problems as personal, they will seek to solve these problems individually, on a personal level. However if they recognize that their problems are a direct result of the system of relations, they will get together and change the system, as a way of solving their collective and personal problems.

We should always keep in mind that politics is a battle between competing definitions. All discourses are political. Politics is the negotiation of meaning. Success in politics is success in gaining 'currency' for particular definitions. This is true power. Our ability to define something to our advantage and at another's expense is a function of our power in society. It is no accident that men created god in their own male image, and had their god delegated the less sexy tasks in life to slaves, women, and others with little power, who this god gave them the right to subjugate to their own wishes.

Many of the participants are only active behind the scenes. They prefer to remain invisible. This frees them from public accountability. They hire professional lobbyists to lobby for them. They hire professional public relations teams to promote the definitions they wish to make hegemonic. They seek to have these definitions institutionalized, naturalized, and normalized. They want you to take these definitions for granted, as if they were natural, rather than 'constructed'. It takes a lot of interrogation to identify which vested interest groups are actually exercising their power 'behind the scenes'.

The masters pulling the strings don't like us knowing who they are, and what their intentions are. True power is rarely visible. It is much more effective to exert influence secretly, discretely, rather than openly. There is usually less resistance. People don't like being manipulated. Power is best kept well hidden, lest the manipulated become wary, and start asking questions about why the powerful should have so much power!

What's good for 'MM industries', we will come to 'understand', is good for us. Everyone will come to feel the same way, so that 'what is good for MM industries is good for everyone'. Often we will have absolutely no idea why we believe this is true. Everyone believes it to be true, apart from a few 'wacko freaks' on the margins of society. Anyway, we are too busy to bother thinking about that. No-one else seems to question it, so why should we? I don't want to be defined as a 'wacko freak'. I don't want to end up on the margins of society. So I'll go along to get along. Hope for the best. Try to 'get ahead'.

Only crazy people question what is 'obvious'. Z is good for me. Z is good for everyone. We need Z. Thank god for Z! Anyone who doesn't love Z must be a wacko freak!

First you must identify your own vested interests

Everyone has vested interests in particular ways of defining things. In some cases these interests are obvious. If you profit financially from the definition of smoking as a harmless lifestyle choice, you will fight any attempts to define smoking as a deadly drug addiction. Most vested interests, however, are much more subtle. Particular ways of defining things may upset those you love. They may challenge your positive definitions of yourself. They may define some of your past behaviors and future plans as unethical and unacceptable. For these reasons you may attempt to deny many compelling arguments. You may be addicted to tobacco products, and not wish to be defined as an 'addict'. You may not wish to have your public smoking defined as a health hazard to others. So even if you don't have a financial interest in the definitions surrounding the tobacco industry, you do have emotional vested interests. These are often the most basic and the most powerful. They are also the hardest to identify, articulate, and interrogate.

The ideal philosopher will ask themselves what possible vested interests they may have in defining things in particular ways, of seeing the world around them as they do. Being a philosopher is firstly about knowing yourself. Only then is the philosopher able to empathize with, and 'know' other people. As Shakespeare wrote: 'To know a man well were to know oneself'.

Many people lack self-knowledge. They live in denial, and self-deception. They repress their authentic selves and hide behind 'masks', what Jung calls a persona. They often feel they have to, or should. They deny parts of their true natures and in doing so lose their 'integrity', resulting in 'dis-integration of their 'whole'. Holiness, as we shall see, is about becoming 'whole' once more. Ornish discovered the medical impacts of the disease produced by leading inauthentic lives.

In our intimate personal relationships, and international politics alike, we often feel that we need others to be honest with us. Then we realize how problematic such a notion is, given how unlikely it is that people are capable of even being honest with themselves. The irony is that psychologists define being well-adjusted as having a flexible persona. Repression and denial are seen as essential to successful adjustment to the demands of society for deception and dissimulation. Freud defines them as defense mechanisms which reconcile the individual's desires with the demands of society. However where this repression is not done consciously, it results in the production of neurotic, psychosomatic symptoms, anxiety, and self-punishment, which results in avoidable suffering and misery. Therefore the holistic philosopher seeks transparency and holistically informed consent as the starting point for the decision making process.

Balancing the many realities

We live in a constant state of conflict or tension between our personal experience of reality, the subjective experiences of reality of those we interact with, and the hegemonic, dominant social reality of the beneficiary classes. We must reconcile competing 'realities' in a continual 'balancing act'. In order to be 'successful' we must adapt to the demands of others, and society, to act as if things are other than how we actually experience them. Thus we are all 'actors'. This comes at the cost of a lack authenticity and (w)holiness.

Mental health is defined as the ability to function in society. Thus the mentally 'healthy' person is defined by their 'mitlaufen'. They go along and get along. They wear masks and pretend, realizing that to win friends and influence people you must first give them approval, acceptance, and validation. The most adapted have been socialized within the hegemonic definitions and simply take them for granted. Others must try to convince themselves that the social reality is the primary reality, aware that the best liars manage first to convince themselves.

The definition 'insane' is applied to anyone whose behavior is challenging or discomforting to others, or threatens the hegemonic definitions of reality, and hence the interests of the beneficiary classes. The dissident is thus automatically defined as 'insane'. Thus the Catholic Church defined Galileo as insane. He was forced to 'recant' reality, to avoid 'fates worse than death'.

We desire anthropocentrism, purpose, meaning, gods, karma, and justice in the world and so on. We have wish lists that cannot be filled in reality, so we fulfill them in our fantasy. This allows us to live in denial, and avoid confronting the horrible realities of existentialism in a harsh, cruel, unjust, amoral and indifferent world. Surveys indicating that the majority of people do manage to believe in 'god', and that the world is just, despite the facts, attest to the efficacy of such coping mechanisms, such 'repressions'.

Superstition, Religion, and Ritual, as forerunners of Science

We look for patterns in interactions and outcomes. This allows us to construct 'meaning'. Meaning is the relationship of all things to each other. It also gives us a sense of 'order' and predictability. This gives us a sense of security. We employ our 'understanding' of the world to satisfy our desires. We once believed that gods were responsible for all the natural phenomena we are at the mercy of. We believed that we could appeal to these gods through magic, prayer, sacrifice, votive offerings, and rituals, to protect our interests, to provide for us, to ensure the fertility of our crops, animals, and people, and the success of our harvests, hunts, and wars. Superstitions address a desire for control and security, in the absence of a full understanding of the nature of reality. They were the precursors to our more modern 'scientific' approaches to dealing with our vulnerable condition. See 'Religion' for details.

Onus Probandi

Onus Probandi means burden of proof. If the burden of proof is on you, it means that you must demonstrate that your argument is compelling. You have to give me some proof or reason to believe you. If I claim that there is an invisible, intangible, pink elephant sitting next to you, then you would expect me to justify my claim, to provide compelling evidence or arguments to support it. You would consider it extremely unconventional and ludicrous for me to claim that until you could disprove my claim, that you should act as if there was an intangible pink elephant sitting next to you. You would soon recognize that it is impossible to disprove that something intangible exists. How could you disprove that there is an intangible, invisible pink elephant there? You would never accept that your inability to disprove that something exists makes my contention that it does exist any more compelling. So why do the rules suddenly change when we talk about God?

It seems that about the same time I formulated this argument, a similar one concerning 'invisible pink unicorns' appeared on the early form of the the world-wide-web, in a 'user-group' chat-room. I wonder if it is pure convergence, or someone has appropriated my own arguments, merely changing the animal?

If you are not-a-theist, be careful when you respond to the question 'don't you believe in god?' It is loaded with an implicit assumption. It is like asking someone if they beat their wives more or less often than they used to. Saying that you don't believe in god implies that you accept that this 'god' exists, but you simply don't believe in it. That would be like saying 'I don't believe it is raining', when it is raining. An atheist is someone who is not a theist, and nothing more. The 'onus probandi' falls completely on the theist. The not-theist does not have to argue anything. It is up to the theist to prove that the 'god' they believe in exists.

If someone asks you if you believe in god, tell them that their question is so loaded with assumptions that it is in fact an assertion masquerading as a question. Tell them to be honest, and come back when they have a real question for you to answer. If they want to play card tricks, tell them to bring some cards next time. Ask them if they believe in the Easter Bunny, or better still, Zeus. Ask the question with all seriousness and interrogate their response with all sincerity. Maybe they'll learn something, or at least stop bothering not-theists with their trick questions.

The reality is that there are better explanations for everything we can experience about the world than those offered by religious dogma. And anyway, as Hume noted, if you are going to assume that some 'god' exists that 'created' the world you are going to have to explain where this 'god' came from. And if you are going to say he just is, and always was, then why not just settle for a universe that is, and always was? Assuming that a sophisticated and complex god capable of creating a sophisticated and complex universe was itself not 'created', that is, didn't need 'creating', is a 'greater' assumption than simply remaining with a complex and sophisticated universe that didn't need to be created, as it simply is, and always was. Why add a level of assumptions? Read more about Hume in 'Convergences'.

How can you prove that Santa Claus does not exist? How can you prove that the Easter Bunny does not exist? How can you prove that fairies don't exist? No-one even expects you to. They expect that anyone who claims that Santa Claus and his team of reindeer exists would provide compelling arguments to back themselves up. Of course they haven't got any. So no-one would take such claims seriously. Why then, does anyone take claims that some god exists seriously? Why do most people affiliate themselves with religions?

We can follow the history and evolution of 'gods' and 'creation' myths over the millennia.

We know the origins of the myths of Santa Claus ('golden top' mushrooms or Saint Nicholas) and his magical reindeer (hallucinations). It would be nice if Santa Claus did exist, and rewarded good children, and provided poor children with presents. It would be nice if there was a fair and just god, and a heaven where those of us

lucky enough to have had loved ones would be rejoined with them. Both Santa Claus and God 'should' to exist, but that doesn't mean they do. Lots of things 'should' be, but aren't.

In any case the god of the bible is not fair, nor just. And looking at the world around me I'd have to define any 'god' as incompetent, unless he gave me some compelling explanation for why the world is so ineffably *&%\$#! up. And I wouldn't accept an ineffable one. We would deserve a really good one. Especially those whose lives are defined by unending suffering.

And remember, even if we didn't have a compelling explanation for everything we experience of the world, it wouldn't make a specious one any more compelling, even if it did make it more attractive, or satisfy a desperation for meaning and comprehensibility.

It might make it more 'acceptable', but no more compelling. Even if there is no compelling alternative, a specious argument is still a specious argument.

However we do have compelling explanations. Evolution, and physics provide compelling explanations for everything there is to explain. We have absolutely no need to resort to fairy-tales or 'gods' to explain the world as we have inherited it.

And the argument that we have nothing to lose by believing, but everything to lose by not believing, and that therefore, logically, we should believe, applies equally to every form of superstition you could chose to mention. If you are going to 'err on the side of caution' and behave 'superstitiously', then you are going to live in a very obsessive neurotic world indeed. In fact Freud defines religion as a form of obsessive neurosis. Read more about this in 'Religion'.

Only a decision making process can validly be defined as good or bad

'Good' choices are merely decisions that converge with good outcomes. A decision is only good or bad in hindsight. Therefore it is invalid to talk of a good decision. Rather, we can only validly talk about good or bad decision making processes. We cannot predict the outcome of our decisions with certainty. Monkeys can select good shares as well as the best paid of stockbrokers. So don't torture yourself for the outcomes. Those whose decisions turn out to be good of course claim credit, and rationalize their decisions in hindsight, embellishing the process. Often the reasons they made the decision have nothing to do with why their decision proved successful.

The outcomes often have no connection with their reasoning. So their success is pure luck. It only appears that their reasoning was responsible for their luck. They chose X due to Y. However in reality the reason X proved, in hindsight, a good decision, had nothing to do with Y. The reasoning may have been completely wrong. That it lead the actor to choose Y was simply good luck. This is why 'stock market reports are so frustrating to endure. The presenters act like they have some special understanding, by 'explaining' the market movements. They will say the market was responding to particular economic news. In fact they have no idea why. They simply 'unite' correlated things which usually have no connection. However the audience knows no better, and they accept that the correlated things existed in a cause-effect relationship. Hume explained how typical this is for human nature, to unite things into wholes, or by relations of cause and effect, which do not exist in reality.

Making and implementing decisions

The call to a co-operative approach to securing our individual and collective sense of security of course raises the question of how such an approach can be managed. Competition for privilege, power, and personal benefits has been the motivating force behind most of our modern human interaction. We are living with and in the consequences of this. Competition does facilitate decision making, as the winner gets to impose their plans on the losers. Definitions and systems of relations are imposed on the losers, and in this way decisions are made and enforced. Something gets done.

Some way must be found for people to decide whose approach to a problem will be taken, and how those who disagree will be compelled or motivated to accept or comply with the outcomes.

Under competition no consensus need be arrived at. One group is either granted the power by a majority vote, or takes the power by means of overwhelming force. It can do what it wants. The others are either powerless to stop it, or accept the outcome as unfortunate but legitimate and to be at least nominally accepted. Those whose plans were not adopted may secretly conspire and scheme to undermine the power of the current elites, and work against the success of the adopted plan and gain support for their own, but they must in principle accept the legitimacy of power and authority per se, so that they themselves can hope to take advantage of that power and authority when it falls, as they hope it will at some point in time, into their hands.

Of course as not everyone is working towards the same goals. Many people will merely withhold their best efforts, and work only half-heartedly. Or as Homer Simpson would say 'Half-assed'. They will not be motivated to employ their human resources to their maximum capacity. They will be unproductive. They will not produce as much value as they could. There will not be much value produced by the participants of the system, and hence there won't be much to consume.

This will impact even upon those who identify with the system, and who are doing their best to realize its objectives. Those who work hard will not be able to be rewarded, as there will be little value to reward them with. Soon they too will lose faith in the system and the plans that they had originally supported. They too will begin to withdraw their best efforts. Eventually the system will collapse into itself, due to its inability to motivate its participants to produce value. This is what happened in the U.S.S.R and ultimately lead to its collapse.

However the plans, at least in the short term, will go ahead and the decisions will be acted on. Those who defend such a process would point to this as legitimating such a process as effective, even as the best of all possible worlds.

Of course they are not lucky enough to have been offered real alternatives, or ingenious enough to have imagined them for themselves. Therefore they fail to recognize the opportunity costs of adopting such a competitive approach to societal decision making. Further, they fail to recognize all the costs, including externalities, of the competitive approach to problem solving, conflict resolution, and decision making. They fail to recognize the true nature of reality, and the reality of our natures. They fail to recognize that more optimal behaviors would generate more optimal outcomes for everyone, and more positive life experiences for us all.

The alternative is more intellectually demanding, and requires us to give up on the notion of opportunistically seeking security and satisfaction at the expense of others. It requires us to give up on the notion of becoming the beneficiaries of inherited inequality. It requires enlightenment and holistic reason. It requires fundamental shifts in our ways of seeing and being and acting. It requires us to co-operate rather than compete, and to accept decisions based on how compelling they are, based on how well they meet our collective needs, rather than on how convenient or rewarding they are for us and ours in particular.

Paradigm shifts and Gateway events

Thomas Kuhn (1922-1996) coined the term Paradigm shift in his 1962 'The structure of scientific revolutions' to refer to significant changes in the basic assumptions underlying the dominant hegemonic world-view and its reflexive scientific model. These lead to a 'crisis' and this world-view's 'dis-integration', when it cannot reconcile the 'new' assumptions with the old 'paradigm', the existing whole, model, or dominant hegemonic social reality. This produces a 'paradigm shift'.

New assumptions, definitions, awarenesses, discoveries, measuring tools, techniques, technologies, or even natural disasters or social revolutions, produce what Dawkin's calls 'gateway events'. As I say, a small change in the assumptions which underlie your system of beliefs can produce huge transformations, personal and social. Things that were impossible before the 'gateway event', new opportunities for improvement, are opened up. History is made, rather than simply re-produced.

Sadly, however Max Planck probably had a point when he argued that... 'a new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it.'

It appears that few people are willing to change their views even in the light of compelling arguments which would make such changes appear unavoidable to a reasonable person. It is often only the 'young-lions', the new generation that have yet to commit to their world-views and beliefs, that are amenable to learning. For them it doesn't require 'change' as such. This is one reason why all authoritarian regimes, the Catholic Church included, focus their energies on 'socializing' the young into their dominant hegemonic social reality or 'paradigm'.

In 1900, Lord Kelvin famously stated, 'There is nothing new to be discovered in physics now. All that remains is more and more precise measurement.' Five years later, Albert Einstein published his paper on special relativity. Most people are like Lord Kelvin. They can't even conceive of the possibility of 'paradigm shifts' and transformations.

This book is about increasing your openness to the possibility of superior, more optimal ways of relating to each other and our world. By challenging many of the dominant hegemonic definitions I am seeking a fundamental 'paradigm shift' from the opportunistic exploitation of inequality, to the principled, holistically enlightened optimisation of the life experience of each individual.

This is the personal and social transformation I seek. This is the true 'revolution'. Is the current 'paradigm', the current dominant hegemonic set of reflexive definitions and systems of relations capable of integrating more compelling assumptions and arguments, or will they merely highlight the inconsistencies and lack of integrity of the current social reality, bringing it to crisis point, and ultimately dis-integration? If so, we must have a 'replacement' paradigm on hand.

This book is also about working in this direction. We need to interrogate our current paradigms, to keep what is valuable, and to dispose of the 'junk', the sub-optimal elements, beginning with the truly malignant elements. We also need to innovate, to find more creative and optimal solutions to problems that most people haven't even recognized yet. We need to begin making history. First we must stop re-producing history. We must stop re-producing the dominant hegemonic paradigms. Their existence hampers our every move. The optimal social reality is not compatible with the existent one. We need to clear the forest floor, to provide some 'socio-historical-space', to let the sun shine on, and nurture, a new, more optimal paradigm.

And even before we have seen the new paradigm, we must ensure that it never becomes 'ossified', a thing unto itself. We may have 'made' history, but we have not 'ended' it. We must build in controls to ensure that the new paradigm becomes flexible and open to things we cannot even imagine yet. We must be careful not to commit the

same sins as our predecessors, who assumed that the question was a closed one, and that they had found the final answer, that history had ended with them.

The questions of philosophy and science are open ended ones. The answers will interact with the questions to form new questions. Determinism is interactive and reiterative. It is a process. The future is always 'becoming'. The present is dynamic. Future generations will take things for granted that we today cannot even imagine as being possibilities. We are the past's future, and the future's past.

If you let people deny reality, they will, but they will comply with laws based on reality

Psychological research shows that people rationalize actions which were motivated by emotional drives, after the event. Get people first to do something nice to someone of another ethnic group, and they will justify and rationalize this in ways that reduce their racism. Get people to comply with laws, and they will rationalize their actions, which were motivated by an emotional aversion to paying fines, in terms of logic and reason. They will suddenly find that it is logical and reasonable to wear seat-belts, not wanting to admit that their actions were motivated by emotional aversions, rather than reason. In any case, whatever reason they imagine they have, they will ultimately act as if they were reasonable, rational, logical actors.

Denial, spin doctoring, and revision means most attempts to enlighten people with compelling arguments tend to fall on deaf ears and blind eyes. People do not want to hear or see and so they simply stubbornly refuse to. They deny reality and hold onto their self-deceptions. Their peers support them. The majority is usually wrong. All progress has ultimately been made by the minority forcing change upon the majority by the threat or use of force. In the end we may establish the facts as best we can, but their acceptance will usually need to be coerced and not voluntary.

Hence we have speeding laws, seatbelt laws, and all manner of laws. People will do what they want to, and what they have to. People tend to convince themselves that their motivation is intrinsic, that they do the right thing because it is the right thing, but in reality their motivations are usually extrinsic. They do the right thing because a price is imposed on them if they do not, in the form of fines, deterrents, and other costs of non-compliance.

This is why we waste billions of dollars of scarce resources in policing and law enforcement. People do not really care about right and wrong, good and bad, only what is right and good for them and theirs. Smokers did not stop poisoning others out of good will or consideration for others. If that was the case then the laws would never have been necessary in the first place. Lobbying for laws, producing laws, and then enforcing laws, is very expensive. Laws are only the last resort. In virtually every case where self-regulation was tried, it failed, and laws, and deterrents, proved necessary.

Towards more creativity and eliminating the fear of being wrong

There are many popular misconceptions regarding the nature of the creative process. Many of these misunderstandings arise from the problematic popular language formulations we have considered, including those surrounding cause and effect, and the associated concept of creation. We can be forgiven for hearing a beautiful song and imagining that the song came in some blinding flash of inspiration. We fail to recognize the many years of constant learning, experimentation, and failed attempts at finding 'music' among the fantastically large number of possible combinations of notes, timings, phrasings, accents, and rhythms.

Of course the composer themselves may have the subjective experience that they did just pluck the song from the air, but this fails to recognize the groundwork they had already put in during the learning and practicing of their craft. I surprised myself with my own revelations and insights during the continuous process of producing this book.

There is of course a huge selection bias intrinsic in the very fact that we generally only become aware of the creative successes, the end compositions, and remain ignorant of the countless failures. This can account for our misconceptions about creativity. The final composition is composed of hits, attempts that bore fruit, and makes no reference to the development of the composer over time, and the more often than not large number of misses which they or their audiences rejected.

This is analogous to the true nature of evolution. We are only ever presented with the products of negative selection. We can be forgiven for perceiving evolution as positive selection, in the absence of an awareness of how the current apparent 'harmony' is the result of a vicious, bitter struggle for survival.

If you are a chicken, locked in a cage with 3 others, in a warehouse full of hundreds of such cages, breathing filthy air, never having known natural sunlight, any kind of 'freedom', let alone 'joy', awaiting slaughter once your 'productivity' declines, then you are unlikely to be able to validate definitions of this as 'the best of all possible worlds.' I am sure you would be able to imagine a better one. Of course if you are a spoiled, privileged, lucky human (or one of their pets) living in luxury, with no obligations, free to pursue and satisfy your desires, then for you the world will be worthy of reproduction, exactly how it is. But would the battery hen owner be keen on reproducing the world of the battery hen, if they had a random chance of living the battery hen's life next time around?

The popular formulations of evolution and creativity interdependently reinforce each other. They are both heavily supported by the bias in experiencing more or less exclusively the 'successful' outcomes. We don't get to observe the process, which occurs over millennia. We rarely get to observe species becoming extinct. We only get to experience the current relative harmony, and its relative synergies.

And if Eastern leaders want their society's to become more creative, for economic or social reasons, they will have to come to terms with the hit and miss nature of creativity. They will have to give up on the notion of 'saving face' by pretending to know everything, and pretending 'there are no problems here'. Rewarding people for having problems, for owning up to them on a personal and organizational level, and for taking planned, reasonable risks, is pre-requisite to the 'creative', 'generative' process.

This is a cultural dimension of progress that is harder to manage and popularize than the purely technical ones. Learning 'more' will not produce generative thinking. You need to learn how to take risks. You need to support the process. You need to socialize people into the process. We need to lose our fear of 'being wrong', of 'losing face'. We need to 'learn' that other's approval and acceptance of us, our true 'social-security', is not dependent upon producing the impression that we are perfect and infallible.

We have to abandon the 'quiet desperation' of impression management. It is time for the 'desperate housewives' to abandon their 'collective ignorance'. It is time to acknowledge that 'people who don't make mistakes

don't make anything'. See De Bono's and my attempts at 'Teaching (generative) thinking' in 'Convergences'. Generative thinking is also necessary to prevent philosophy from becoming a cul-de-sac.

Once we have liberated and enlightened ourselves of un-truth and dogma, what are we left with? This is the ultimate challenge, generative thought, creative responses to TROONATNOOR. The term 'generative' is similar to my own 'productive'. It is necessary to avoid using nonsense, meaningless terms like create, creation, and thus creativity, in the same way it is important to avoid using teleological, functionalist language formulations such as 'we have eyes to see'.

If you try to get it right in spite of the system, you merely re-produce it

Working hard to produce a more just, a more optimal society, from within the system, is counterproductive. Any exceptional outcomes in the direction of justice that you achieve will be held up as defining characteristics of the system you are trying to transform. They will be used to legitimate the system. They will be used as selective evidence that the system is functioning. They will actually prevent real fundamental transformations. If you work yourself into a nervous breakdown trying to make the education system that you inherited work, then you will be perpetuating that system. The system won't change.

You will destroy yourself. You may have some small and commendable successes that will benefit a few children. However by providing public relations and impression management fodder, you will empower the administration to deny the fundamental problems that exist in the system. The system will not be improved. In fact you will have actively contributed to the continuation of the past practices of educational apartheid, cultures of denial and victimization of whistle-blowers, and the general culture of violence that the education system produces, reinforces, and re-produces.

You will be feeding the power of the inept, immoral, smugly complacent and self-satisfied administration. They will use your positive achievements to falsely demonstrate that there are no problems. They will take credit for your achievements. You will feed their smug complacency. You will sacrifice yourself to their impression management. Ultimately you will, with all the best intentions, re-produce dis-value.

Latencies and algorithms reducing the whole to the sum of its parts

Conventional Interactionists posit, contend, argue, or implicitly assume, that 'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.' They claim that the whole is not reducible to its component parts. The argument that properties emerge out of interactions which are not properties of any of the things interacting, implicitly assumes that something of with one property can be produced by something that does not have this property. I would argue that any apparent new properties are mere artifacts of our ignorance of the properties of the things interacting. Just because a property is not manifest, perceived, or observed in the things that are interacting, does not mean that it is not present. It may simply be latent in the things that are interacting. This simply means it is not 'manifest'. It does not mean that it is 'produced' by the interaction, it is merely 'expressed' through the interaction.

Two brown-eyed parents can produce blue-eyed children. The recessive genes for blue eyes were latent in each parent, present but not manifest. They were only 'expressed' in their offspring. The properties of the whole is the sum of the properties of the parts, not just the properties of the parts that are manifest and available to our observation, but all the properties of the parts. In addition to this are the algorithms governing the interactions, which make up a part of the whole we call the 'interaction'.

The Interactionists contention arises from a failure to recognize that intrinsic to the parts are algorithms or rules governing how they will behave in interaction with each other, and the rest of their 'environment'. When such algorithms are included in the calculations, the summing, then the whole will be the sum of the parts. A particular property of X is the way it will interact with Y, under specific conditions, in a specific 'environment'.

The whole interaction could be defined as an event. The event is the iterative process of interaction between components, wholes, and the environment.

I say iterative as each 'player' in the interaction affects each other player, and they all affect, and are affected by, the larger environment they interact in, and constitute by their very interactions. Existing 'events' are interactively determined by precedent 'events', and interactively determine 'antecedent' events. What comes before determines what comes after. In other words, the present set of conditions is inherited. These determine what potential there is to manifest, what 'states' can be manifest. Which states actually do manifest will be a resultant of the interactions that take place. These are, however, also determined by previous, antecedent, interactions.

Without knowledge of these algorithms, we will not be able to understand what is taking place in the interactions. Variables which we are unaware of in the algorithmic interactions probably account for the apparent chaos that is observed in the universe.

We are pretty certain that the sun will 'rise' for the next billion or so years. Our ancestors were not so sure. For them it was uncertain. They 'experienced' more chaos than we do. For them everything was the arbitrary will of the 'gods'. They attempted to gain some sense of 'order' by distributing 'responsibility' for natural phenomena among their gods. The gods could then be appealed to maintain 'stability' and 'order' among the phenomena they controlled.

They sacrificed their most precious people and things to the gods, as a votive offering, and as a means to express their gratitude to their gods for saving them from 'chaos'. The production of gods was an attempt to construct meaning and produce a sense of order. It was an early stage in the evolution of what we today call science. Many people are unwilling to let go of the sense of order and meaning that 'gods' provide. They therefore re-produce these gods. See 'Religion' for more.

Knowledge of the particular latent properties things will manifest in interaction with other things would allow for accurate predictions. Interactions only need be consistent for the periods of time that are of value to humans. It may be that algorithms are open ended questions with constantly new answers, rather than closed 'loops'

or 'cycles' with their 'poor pageantry of repetition... bridging times burgeoning voids'. 'Humean uniformities' are enough for us to employ heuristically, to our practical advantage, even if reality is like a classroom of students that behaves only while we are observing it, and when we turn our backs on it, returns to chaos.

The horrific (for most) prospect of Nietzsche's 'eternal recurrence', in which the universe expands, reaches a maximum point, then contracts back until it resolves to a singularity, and explodes again in a new 'big bang', reproducing the entire cycle over and over again, and our individual experience of it, is only avoidable if we inhabit different 'experience engines' each time around, or if the universe itself reproduces in a way that allows mutation. Otherwise all experience in the universe would be constantly repeated. Note that Nietzsche doesn't say he believes in 'eternal recurrence'. He merely notes that that the capacity to authentically welcome it, if it were true, would represent the ultimate affirmation of life.

If the universe does in fact cycle through black holes, big bangs, followed by expansion, contraction, black holes, big bangs, and so on, there are alternative ways we might experience this. We might experience the same lives over and over. We might experience all the different lives that have been lived. I can imagine there are connoisseurs of pain, like there are people who pay to watch horror movies, or tragedy. However who would be able to savor the dull drudge and quiet desperation that most lives consist of? Perhaps aliens set up this world, to inhabit the most interesting, satisfying, exciting, and rewarding lives, while we are merely the background players required to make it all work. After all, we do refer to the most successful people as stars. See 'Convergences' for details.

A latent property is one that is not yet manifest, one that has not yet emerged. Another word for latency is 'potential'. A latency always has the potential to manifest or emerge under particular conditions, sets of interactions, what we would holistically call 'events'. These conditions produce, reflexively, a particular environment with the necessary and sufficient properties to facilitate the emergence of the latent property, and then to sustain it by constantly re-producing, it.

Musical genius, for example, cannot emerge and realize its full latent potential without the right environment. Reflexively, independent of how perfect the environment is, musical genius can not emerge in a person who does not have the genetic potential for such genius. A property must be latent in order for it to emerge. We are not 'blank slates' upon which anything can be written. We are more like narratives written with lemon juice. With the correct application of heat, we can facilitate the realization, of any latent potential.

Apparent order, chaos, and 'global warming'

Forces interact, producing outcomes. The stability of these outcomes is dependent on the stability of the underlying interactions in which they are constantly being re-produced and from which the propergents emerge. The resultant emerges in real-time from the interactions and is therefore contemporaneous with the underlying interactions. The propergent, resultant, process, or organism, maintains integrity as an outcome as long as the interactions continue to re-produce themselves, and the propergent, the organism, the processes, the resultant. This is the relative stability in the universe. There is only stability in the sense of the constant and, contemporaneous with the observer, reproduction of epiphenomena over space-time.

It is a result of a fallacy of composition, in this case, that of the duration of space-time that is or can be experienced or observed, that produces our human perception of order. The longer the space-time 'span' we observe for, the fewer things will appear to be stable. As time approaches infinity, the perception of order will disappear. The only absolute stability lies in primities, the primal properties of the universe.

Apparent chaos may be merely a function of our ignorance of the algorithms intrinsic to every particular thing in the universe. On the other hand, apparent order may merely be a function of the level of composition humans take when making observations. A sea animal that lived for a few seconds, but experienced these few seconds with such an intensity that its subjective life was full and rewarding, might open a research institute and win the equivalent of a sea-animal Nobel prize for its 'law of permanent verges'.

It might observe that its universe seemed perpetually on the brink of a wave which would never 'crash'. It could cite generations of research and empirical observation to 'prove' that its universe was so 'ordered' that it was on the crest of a permanent wave. The population would find this 'order' appealing and comforting. The notion of chaos is disturbing. If the whole civilization developed on this 'wave' over hundreds of generations, then for all intensive purposes, as far as these creatures were concerned, the universe was stable, ordered and predictable.

A human observer on the beach, with their human perceptions and experience of time and the 'waves', would see a wave approach the beach, crash on the sand, and retreat back into the sea. Oh, the chaos of the sea, they would think to themselves. David Hume considered that it is possible that we are in fact on that sort of wave. We only assume that the order we observe is stable over space-time. It is an assumption. The condition of predictability and order we experience may simply be the crest of a wave, which will inevitably, perhaps soon, crash.

The order we have experienced to date may last a hundred years, a thousand years, or a billion years. We may be in a relatively ordered part of a universal and continuous cycle that runs from relative order to relative chaos and back again. This does in fact seem to be consistent with what we can observe and extrapolate about the universe, the posited big bang and ultimate implosion of the universe, and even our recorded weather patterns. In terms of 'global warming' and the apparent increasing volatility of weather, floods, cyclones, tornadoes, droughts, snow-falls, and so on, this realization must give us pause.

Our formal statistics on weather only go back a few generations. We cannot be sure if the apparent 'changes' we are experiencing are in fact consistent with a longer term cycle we are not aware of. Thus our notions of 'global warming' may be an artifact of the level of composition of time we apply to our observations. Taken over only a few generations, the earth appears to be experiencing an 'anomaly, and represent an increase in 'chaos'. However seen over hundreds of generations, what we observe may be the continuation of longer-term ordered cycles.

There is no escape from ourselves, or from reality

There are ever fewer 'new worlds' to escape to, ever fewer 'green-fields'. The fantasy of heaven on earth or elsewhere is the last resort of those who hope to escape.

The original form of escapism is religion. All religions promise their participants an afterlife, either in Valhalla, Nirvana, Heaven, or some other place where all the wrongs of this world will be put right, where the guilty will be punished and the innocent rewarded, and where we will be reunited with our loved ones and live in an Eden or state of perpetual bliss.

For those 'infidels' (un-faithful) among us, we are left with the promise of space travel, life on other planets, or on space stations. Perhaps this defines our fascination with space travel and colonizing other worlds. This is an extension of our historical drive for discovering new territory on which to build new worlds. Human history demonstrates that we are our greatest enemy, that we bring our problems with us, for they are us. We have turned every paradise, every utopia we have escaped to, into a new dystopia. If we are to construct new societies, it must be through transforming the existing ones, which means through transforming ourselves, our ways of relating, of defining, of constructing meaning, of co-existing, of producing and distributing value, including positive experiences.

Energy, like meaning, is reflexive

The concept 'energy' is merely a convention adopted to talk about the relationship between states of matter. Thus energy is purely 'reflexive', like meaning. A change in the state of some particles reflexively produces changes in the states of other particles it is interacting with. These changes in state are experienced as heating and cooling, changes in pressure, changes in state. The various states are solid, gas, liquid, and 'plasma'. In practical terms we define energy as the ability to perform 'work'. This defines our 'interest' in energy. We wish to employ it to satisfy our desires. In heuristic terms we think of energy as a thing in itself. However we should remember that, like meaning, it is simply a product of the relationship between things. It is in fact a reflexive relationship, rather than a thing in itself.

Perhaps awareness is a similar property. It is a relationship. It is more like information than a medium. However all data storage requires a medium. Thus D.N.A is the father, and our brain is the son, the medium for the 'holy ghost' to express itself, to find some 'form'. Hence energy is not a substance, although it expresses itself in forms we relate to as 'substances'. The average High school student is by now aware that you cannot 'destroy' anything in the universe. You can only change its state. Perhaps 'wave-particle' duality can be expressed as follows: a tidal wave doesn't travel across the ocean. It is the energy of the tidal wave that travels across the ocean, transmitting its energy from one wave to the next.

The reflexivity of Meaning and the evolving complexity of language

Language has arisen out of the 'need' to define more and more things as 'particular'. Defining something is to define it as something 'else', something that is not the 'other' things. We define things in relation to what they are not, as much as by what they are. All things are defined relative to everything else that is known, perceived, or experienced. As we experience and perceive the 'otherness' of more and more things, and become more subtle in the way that we recognize particular 'differences', our language reflexively becomes more differentiated, subtle, and specific.

The moment a new relationship emerges between things, a new meaning or definition arises. Meaning is, after all, the relationship between things. Meaning is reflexive. At first there exist trees. Then we note that some trees lose their leaves in winter. Some bear fruit. Some have hardwood good for building. Some have softwood good for making furniture. The sap of some is sweet. The sap of some is good for making rubber. We identify more and more particular trees. The language reflexively accommodates our awareness or perception of differences, and becomes more differentiated and specific.

As different relationships evolve, they generate meanings. As language and intelligence develops, what we call 'abstract' meanings arise. They do so as a function of the ability to express meta-relationships, and make logical deductions based on concepts which have no concrete existence. They exist merely as 'cognitive items' or ideas.

As awareness of more and more particular things develops, and awareness of more intricate and complex relationships emerges, language must become more particular, more complex, and more able to distinguish between more and more things. It must develop the capacity to describe interactions and interdependencies, in order to accurately convey details about relationships, and more and more precisely reflect their meaning. Reform of political campaigning

At present most governments win by gaining the votes of the five or so percent of voters who 'swing', that is, who don't always vote for the same party, usually the one they 'inherited' as part of their holistic, socio-economic-cultural-historical inheritance. Most people actually vote for the same party as their parents. This means advertising can be effective by convincing a relatively small number of targeted voters to vote for a particular party. Advertising campaigns are expensive. Large amounts of money can effectively buy votes in this way. Politicians are therefore keen to accept any money they can get from lobbyists to fund their political advertising campaigns.

Lobbyists who contribute to election campaign funds do so in an attempt to influence political decision making. This situation produces fertile ground for corruption. Perhaps even more significant is that the costs of running an electoral campaign are prohibitive.

Only those who can afford expensive political campaigning have the opportunity to participate in the democratic process. Potentially competent political leaders with no access to financial and media resources, and who are unwilling to prostitute themselves to lobby groups, have no chance of running for office, and therefore of ever being elected. Thus we may never get a chance to vote for the best candidates. This is a collective loss to our society.

In any case, political ads add little to the informed decision making of voters, and represent a huge waste of social resources. These resources could be more productively employed. Political advertising represents a high opportunity cost in terms of both material resources and political options. While President Barack Obama was the only political candidate who refused any political campaign finance contributions from the oil industry, he received over 350 million U.S. dollars in contributions from individuals alone.

We need to limit any political campaign techniques to those which inform rather than manipulating public opinion. In future those running for political office should be given equal media time and resources. They should gain access to these opportunities based on gaining a minimum number of 'pre-votes' from constituents in their electorate.

Campaigning must be based on information, not emotive jingles or clever, manipulative media tricks. Election promises must be made contractual within reason, so that politicians will not be able to 'buy' votes with false or disingenuous promises.

Currently we have the untenable position where voting is often legally compulsory, so voters are forced to enter into a contract with politicians who are not bound by their promises. Most reasonable people don't waste their time and energy negotiating cynical or disingenuous contracts that are made in bad faith, and which no-one is expected or compelled to honor. This is why most people don't vote when they are not compelled to by one form of violence or another.

Such forms of violence include fines and threats of imprisonment. If you do happen to live in such a society, then argue in the highest court at your disposal that you will happily oblige and vote when that same court uses its power to force politicians to honor their promises. A political promise should be a contract. All contracts should be enforced by the legal system. How can a legal system coerce one party to enter into a contract with another party, and then not force that party to honor it? That is an absurd situation. If it was not real, it would be funny.

I can think of no other case where contracts can so easily be ignored, apart from N.S.W Dept. of Education employment contracts. How can state employers be allowed to enter contracts in bad faith and renege on them? How can the nation's largest single employer be allowed to operate like some dodgy Korean Hogwan or Russian English School?

Robert Baer, a CIA Base Officer and CIA advisor in the current U.S Administration was threatened with imprisonment in a mental institution for 'threatening' to 'blow the whistle' on illegal campaign financing. He had continually persisted in asking questions at a senate inquiry into the Administration's occupation of Iraq relating to the allocation of the reconstruction contracts and supply contracts, and secret, that is, illegal, campaign financing.

Remember that one way lobby groups, such as those seeking the immensely lucrative reconstruction contracts, seduce and corrupt politicians and senior public servants is by providing illegal campaign financing and slush funds. These questions were inconvenient for the inquiry board, as they would have incriminated their masters in the Administration. The committee continually told him to cease asking the same question, one which they refused to have included in the investigation, one that would have incriminated those they were employed to protect.

They threatened to have him sent to a psychiatric clinic run by the government. He stated openly that he knew that once they got him in there, that they could contrive pretenses to keep him in there. He resigned his position at the CIA, rather than take such a stupid risk. He said this on camera, for the public record. His experience is typical of our modern world. You'd 'have' to be mad to challenge or threaten the vested interests of the privileged and powerful, the dominant hegemonic interests of the beneficiary classes.

Articulating interests

Interests exist where social actors have the potential to experience costs and benefits due to a definition or decision. A High Priest, or factory owner, and their minor priests, or shareholders, have horizontal interests in the success of 'their' church or company. They directly own them. Lesser priests and workers at the factory, and those that supply those priests and workers with goods and services, have vertical interests in the success of the church or factory. They sell goods and services to them. Without their business they would have no business. They are dependent on the church or factory for employment, and income. These are the direct material interests.

More significant in many cases are the more subtle, general, indirect, underlying, overarching, interconnecting interests and their reflexive definitional counterparts. These are the hardest to articulate and make transparent, and also the most powerful. All particular definitions are supported, iteratively, reflexively, and teleologically, by every other definition, the whole. The boat on the ocean is not supported by any particular molecule of water. It is supported by the ocean.

Every definition reflexive of every other definition. They are all internally consistent with each other. The circle, then, has no beginning or end. Once a teleological loop is formed, there is no start or end to it.

Internal validation is, at least *prima-facie*, convincing. In order to challenge it we must escape the teleological loop, and 'think outside the circle'. We must stand at a distance from the trees to see the forest. We must stand outside the forest. We have to interrogate assumptions from outside the loop, to avoid merely looping. I admit, it can make you a little loopy, and others will define you as loopy!

Some explicit definitions may, speciously and disingenuously, be put forward as foundation assumptions, but it is the implicit, the unstated assumptions built into these that are the real assumptions.

The card trickster deflects our attention from the real trick, which they set up before we have begun paying attention. We rack our brains over and over while the putative trick is done. We have been lured into the loop. The loop follows bent space-time. Inside the loop you can never get to the trick, which is outside of the loop. We have been set up.

We have been trained to start paying attention too late. This is the true trick. The sleight of hand will never be revealed, as it occurred before we started paying attention.

The specious sophist, sometimes disingenuously, sometimes ignorantly, identifies particular assumptions as if they were exhaustive. It is what they fail to say, more than what they do say, that makes, or could make, all the difference. In the same way it is usually the questions we are not asking that are the most important. The card trickster will happily repeat the trick over and over, while allowing you, with all your cleverness, to try to work out how it is done. They will repeat the loop until you give up in frustration. As long as they keep your attention within the loop they never risk revealing anything. As long as you look for the trick inside the loop the trickster is confident of maintaining their secret.

It is the same with the specious sophist. The sophist can present a convincing argument as long as you only interrogate the assumptions articulated by the sophist. You can travel around the loop as often as you like. The arguments will appear convincing. The assumptions will seem to be validated or vindicated by the conclusion, and vice versa. The overall argument will appear sound enough. All parts of the argument will be internally consistent.

We have implicitly assumed that the arguments are exhaustive. The loop is all! We don't even realize we have assumed this. This is the assumption that 'makes an ass of you and me'. This assumption is the trick. Look for problems within the internally consistent teleological, circular loop, and there are none to be found. You have to take a step out of the loop, back in space-time before the loop began. You have to identify what assumptions have

not been articulated. What assumptions are not available for our interrogations? These assumptions are made before the loop begins.

Only when you realize that the trick is actually set up before the 'official' trick begins, can you begin to deconstruct the trick. This is where your interrogations can be productive. This is where you can observe the sleight of hand. This is the level of composition at which you must interrogate the argument. Go back to before the point where you have been trained to begin paying attention. Go deeper in the construction of the argument, where the real assumptions have been made. Once you enter this level you have a chance to reveal how you have been tricked.

Now let's go back to our discussion of interests and the definitions which are iteratively reflexive of them, and which they are iteratively reflexive of.

Anyone deriving 'comfort', 'security', or a sense of well-being from religion, has horizontal interests in the church as a generic institution, even while they belong to competing denominations of religious cults. Of course everyone defines their own cult as a religion, and uses the diminutive, pejorative 'cult' to define other people's dogma. The term pagan is used in the same way by Catholics. They use it in the pejorative. They claim that only their own gods are gods, and only their cult is religion. In fact the Pagans had their own gods and organized religions. In fact the Catholic Church 'borrowed' these gods and rituals, and made them their own, while demonizing the older traditions.

The snake or serpent in Judeo-Christian mythology is a villain. The Ubiquitous symbol for the 'Christianization' of Europe is St. George battling the serpent-dragon. This is all part of the wider practice of 'demonizing' anything associated with the earlier religions that the Christians were in competition with, and ultimately extirpated. In the process millions of innocent people were butchered to death, or burnt alive, simply for having their own faith, and seeing no need to adopt a foreign one.

The snake in ancient Jewish and Greek culture was in fact a symbol for wisdom. The snake or serpent was the guardian of the underworld, the keeper of secrets. It was thus adopted by Hippocrates as a part of the symbol for medicine which is still used today. The Catholic Church combined the horns, the symbol of fertility and abundance, or 'plenty', and the trident (pitchfork) of Poseidon, and the goat's (symbol of fertility) cloven hoof, to produce their 'devil'. Read more in 'Religion'.

Anyone subscribing to beliefs which religion interdependently supports or reinforces has a horizontal interest in the church. Even where they are in conflict or disagreement with many specific ideas or practices of any particular church, they share a common interest in the legitimation, the institutionalization, of the very validity of the concept of religious belief and practice. The same can be said of Capitalist enterprise, where corporations are in competition on a particular, specific level, but share an interest in maintaining capitalism and its relationships in general.

Both the slave owner, and the slave, can have an interest in slavery, as long as the slave themselves aspire to becoming slave owners. This is the aspirational voter some conservative politicians appeal to. The voter may be exploited and underprivileged, but they aspire to moving up the food chain. They have faith in their ability to accumulate privileges. They believe in their own merit, and have faith in the 'justice' of meritocracy. They are on the verge of moving up in the world. They therefore support the privileges of the few at the expense of the many, as they intend and expect to join the ranks of these few privileged, the beneficiaries of inequality and exploitation.

Remember that our world is as it is as the victim is, in principal, no better than the perpetrator. Workers will vote against their apparent class interests, simply as they intend to leave that class behind. Soldiers respect Officer's authority and rank, as they aspire to becoming officers. For this reason they have an interest in the existence of rank and its privileges, even as they presently suffer under them.

Apparent paradoxes resolve themselves upon deeper, closer interrogation. Vested interests are not always obvious. Vested interests can be hard to identify. Often the current 'victim' has the same perceived vested interests as their current 'perpetrator'.

Interrogation demands that all interests be made transparent. Direct material benefits can be obvious and easily articulated. However the subtle interdependencies between material interests are not always obvious. They are harder to identify, articulate, and interrogate. The more subjective, emotional or affective interests are yet harder to reveal.

Can a not-theist blaspheme?

Recently the operators of an Irish web-page were charged with blasphemy under Irish law. Adam and Eve were commanded by this Irish law's 'God' to reproduce so billions would have to suffer for Adam and Eve's curiosity. How could such an entity be deserving of our respect, let alone love? Anyone who was not living in fear of this god would be unable to miss the absurdity of loving such a perverted, cruel, mean, nasty, vicious, childish, pathetic creature.

This god behaves like a baby throwing a tantrum because its will was frustrated or defied. Only such a baby could damn billions of not-yet-conceived people to a life of suffering for the acts of two individuals. I guess this is the point. Most people need some 'justification' for why they should endure their lives of suffering. The 'fall' myth, like myth of Pandora and her box, explain to people why they suffer, and why they have no right to end their own suffering themselves, via suicide.

The story is supposed to show how they 'deserve' to suffer, and how it was god's will.

The reflex of this is that this infantile child will get even angrier if we dare defy his will. Surely we are better off suffering than risking angering this infantile tyrant. The god I read of in the bibles and Koran is mentally deranged, psychotic, infantile, and deluded. He was clearly 'created' in the image of an infantile human, the sort of typically mentally undeveloped tyrant that human history is full of. This perhaps explains why it is so easy for the average infantile, petulant, sociopath human to identify with such a god. This god manages to blame people, even fig trees, for behaving exactly as he has determined they must behave. This is simply cruel and/or deranged.

The term 'Infidel', like 'a-theist', is a loaded term, meaning 'lacking' faith, in the same way that atheist means 'dis-believer', or 'lacking belief'. This 'spins' a positive to a negative. The term 'skeptic' means 'seeker'. This is the appropriate term. It is the equivalent of 'open-minded'. We have so far found nothing compelling in religious dogma. We find no reason to 'believe'. The mind of the 'believer' is closed. They spin this negative, what they call 'faith', into a positive. Further, it is completely arbitrary to apply the terms to a particular religion. No-one calls you an infidel or atheist for not believing in Thor, or Zeus. It is pure arrogance to refer to ancient Greek 'mythology' and Catholic 'theology'.

Surely theology is theology is mythology? And please remember that the correct term is A-gnostic, and not Ag-nostic. Gnosis means 'to know'. Thus the a-theist is someone who is not a theist, and A-gnostic is someone who does not claim to know. These terms mean no more nor less than this. Thus an A-theist or A-gnostic has nothing to prove or justify. They are simply skeptics, open-minded, and still pursuing the truth, still seeking.

We don't take roman gods seriously at all. In fact we refer to Roman or Greek myths and legends, rather than Roman or Greek theology. However most hold the Judeo-Christian-Islamic god in awe. Recently a web page owner was charged under heresy laws in Ireland. The Pope does not feel obliged to put on long pants when entering a Roman temple ruin. The French Religious authorities will arbitrarily refer to Scientology as a cult. The difference between a cult and a religion is simply the number of adherents, and their political power. See 'Religion' for details.

Whistle-blowers sent out into the social desert as Scapegoats

The term scapegoat is used a lot. Do you know where it came from? The German term Suendenbock refers to a sacrifice made to the gods as a form of payment for the collective sins of the community. In an old Jewish ceremony two goats were selected. One would be sacrificed to god. The other would be ceremonially 'burdened' with all the guilt of the Jewish village. I think this occurred on the 'day of atonement'. That goat would then be set free to take all this guilt away from the village and out into the desert, where the desert 'demons' were expected to deal with it. This is of course what your contemporaries do with whistle-blowers. They punish them for the sins of the organization, government, and society, and abandon them, sending them 'out into the desert'. I've been out in that desert for some time now. Most prophets apparently had their own 'years in the desert'. It is an enlightening experience. It motivates a lot of reflection. It offers nothing but time to think and reflect on TROONATNOOR.

The Archetypal hero in Greek Tragedy

The audience demand that the hero die for their defiance, for daring to do what we claim is impossible. They show us up. It is, after all, possible. This makes us look bad. We demand he suffer for showing us up. Once he has suffered, and has died, we can validate him. He no longer represents a threat to our egos. And by defining him as 'super-human', we define him as 'other', as a different species of being from us. Therefore no-one will expect that we should be able to emulate him. We thus free ourselves of any negative reflex definition. Sure, he did it, but he is a super-man, a god-man. We are mere mortals. Thus we lower the benchmark, the standard by which all human behavior is to be measured. Sure it would be great if we all could be like him, but we can't. Jesus was a 'god-man'. No-one need compare their own behavior to such an admirable, noble creature. If Jesus were merely a man, he would have raised the bar so high, that we would really be under pressure to improve our acts.

This is the 'spin' of the Greek tragedy. This is why Jesus must suffer and die for managing to be a better man. If he was not the son of god, then we might feel bad about not behaving like he managed to behave. By idolizing him as the son of god, we escape any comparison with him. So our hostility toward our 'better' is transformed into 'love' for a god-man. We murdered him out of sheer spite, the satisfaction of 'cutting down a tall poppy'. However this is hardly flattering. So we redefine the situation. We re-write the narrative. We revise history. Instead of us having murdered the best man among us, he in fact volunteered, as the son of god, to die as a 'scapegoat' for our sins. Thus our victim becomes our 'Saviour'. We are not murderers. He went to his death voluntarily. For Nietzsche he becomes a potential 'bridge-man' between man as he is now, and how he could be.

Nobler minds bask in the hero's rebellion against fate. He is doomed by human nature to be punished for trying to be a better man. However he will not allow this to deter him from being authentic. This defines his true heroism. His true nobility is in accepting the consequences of his actions as the necessary price he must pay for being authentic. This is his true 'crown'. He bears his 'crown of thorns' with the nobility of a true king. The less noble find his humiliating suffering satisfying.

How dare he 'show them up' by behaving in ways that everyone had agreed were impossible!

Even the least noble experience ambivalent feelings towards this hero. They secretly admire him for his nobility, courage, and goodness, while resenting these very qualities in him. He does what we are too scared or selfish to do. This hero shows that *mitlaufen* is not necessity. We can stand up against it if we wanted to, if we were willing to take the risks, and pay the price.

Jesus' victory was in his affirmation of the price that must be paid for authenticity, and a life worth living. This life is worthy of affirming, as it is one worth suffering and dying for. The audience feel malice toward the hero for dying on his feet, while they live on their knees, for being noble and good while they remain base and opportunistic.

How dare our hero do what we are too fearful, greedy, egoistic, and opportunistic to do! He must pay for his act. How dare he be better and remind us of what we too could be. Our hero must pay with terrible suffering, defeat, humiliation, and death, before we are satisfied that he has paid enough for his daring. Now that we have satisfied our need to 'revenge' his daring we can admire him. Now he is dead he represents no threat. No-one compares themselves to dead people.

And if on top of this we define him as a 'god-man', his new status completely de-couples us from him. No-one expects mere mortals to behave like gods. Thus we are freed of any unfavorable comparisons. His actions no longer represent a reproach to us. No-one expects us to live up to his standards. In this way, ironically, we defeat the man, by transforming him into a god. However he may still have won, by inspiring a few to seek to emulate him. See 'Convergences' and 'Religion' for details.

Don't Kant: Informed consent and Kant's categorical imperative

Informed consent first requires us, like Kant's categorical imperative would, to clear the table of all lies, misconceptions, spin-doctoring, specious sophistry, invalid assumptions, ignorance, denial, superstition, and so on, to facilitate transparency and holistic enlightenment. Only then would we be in a position to be able to give informed consent, or 'speak the truth'.

Kant tells us we should tell the truth, all the while he deceives himself in his metaphysics. This raises the key point in relation to his categorical imperative. People deceive themselves about so many things, so how are they to tell others the truth?

If most philosophers over the history of philosophy had taken Kant's categorical imperative to always tell the truth seriously, then we would have no philosophy to read apart from that of the dogma of the various religions. They would have destroyed the most brilliant philosophers and their works. Those who left themselves at the mercy of the world's religious authorities were threatened with fates worse than death, and where they insisted on speaking up, were publicly tortured to death.

Catholics would have murdered all the open-minded philosophers of Europe, in the same way that the Athenians killed Socrates, and would have killed Aristotle, if he had not left Athens before they could. People who speak the truth are always crushed by those who deceive in the name of some 'higher' truth. Plato let us in on the deal with his 'noble lies' in 'Republic'.

Whistle-blowers throughout history have been victimized, mobbed, and usually murdered for their good intentions. Greek tragedy is the archetype warning of what happens to true heroes. The audience demands they suffer and die for daring to be 'better' than them. In any case, the most deceptive people first deceive themselves. Very few people realize they are deceiving themselves, so how can Kant naively expect them to tell the truth, even if they had the intention of never deceiving others? The philosopher in the context of the Greek tragedy

Fate will break the rebel because the herd demands it. The tragedy is pure Greek. Our hero, cloaked in nobility, grasps victory, finally, in his acceptance of defeat, as the price of living a truth. Thus our hero transcends defeat and fate as the fates destroy his mortal coil. This is our hero's victory. Freedom. And like a phoenix, purified in the fires, our hero's spirit lives eternal in glory. However the price of this victory is high and only for the pure of heart, the dedicated philosopher!

(Old Chinese Curse) May you to live the life of a social innovator

Social innovators are usually loners. They need the opportunity to follow their instincts, which they can usually only do on their own, in the calm and quiet of solitude. The mediocrity of the people they must interact with produces conflict. They are generally considered abrasive as their innovative ways of thinking and behaving challenge and threaten those around them. The others will try to make them conform. The genius, the innovator, must follow their instincts and fight against the current. They don't go along to get along. They are usually victimized, sometimes even demonized, in their own lives.

Only technical innovators are welcome, those who invent gadgets that the public can recognize the value of, and which don't threaten the status quo and its distribution of privileges and burdens. Social innovators are usually crucified. They are usually ignored until after their deaths, when it is less threatening to define them as superior, and when the masses have grown in their ability to comprehend and appreciate the value of their innovations. I wouldn't wish this sort of 'vocation to social innovation' upon anyone I cared about. I would curse my worst enemy to such a life, only if I were really really angry with them at the time.

Anyone exhibiting the slightest predilection for principled behavior and universal justice doesn't stand a chance. Everyone around them will despise them for being more ethical, and take advantage of what they will define as their 'naivety'.

A matter of life and death

When I was young it seemed a tragedy that we were all doomed to die. I wanted to live, and forever. Now I know most of my hopes were unwarranted, my optimism was unfounded, and my illusions of human nature have been corrected, I fear that life might not end with death. That is in fact has been the fear of billions of genuine Buddhists, Jains, Neo-Platonists, and Hindu's over the last few thousand years.

The philosophy of 'being a loner'

Happiness, and intimate relationships, would all mean that 'they' have something to take away from me, to threaten me with, to silence me, to hurt me, to control me through. Then I would not be able to seek what I seek, and offer you what I offer you.

Noble lies to motivate slaves to work in the interests of their masters

Illusions, myths, false hopes, unrealistic expectations, unwarranted optimism, denial, and the 'noble lies' of heaven and hell, are forms of violence that compel people to endure, and worse, reproduce, lives not worth living.

It is true that most of us endure so much in life for so little return. We struggle so hard and get very little for our efforts. It is often false hope, and unrealistically optimistic expectations that motivate us. By the time we realize that our hopes were false, and that our expectations were unrealistic, we have usually already re-produced this situation. We are loathe to admit it to our offspring. We are loathe even to admit it to ourselves. We will live in denial. Our children will go on to do the same thing. History will be reproduced, unless we break the cycle.

Myths sustain the slaves in the interests of the masters. As the slaves also wish to become masters one day, believing this to be possible, they subscribe to many of the myths. Other myths are equally basic to both slave and master. Both are desperate for security in the face of their ultimate dis-integration and death. So the myths are on most levels 'organic', emerging naturally, as a function of TROONATNOOR. They become hegemonic more or less 'naturally'. All the dominant hegemonic interests need to do is to adapt them to their own interests.

The masters need to ensure that the slave has hope of a better life, or simply a fear of death, to ensure that the slave has the motivation to endure their life and thus continue producing the material benefits and privileges that make the lives of the privileged members of the dominant hegemonic order actually worth living.

Anti-Euthanasia laws a continuance of slavery laws, in the interests of the beneficiary classes

If you see no chance of getting what you want from life, then there is little value in merely getting what you need, merely to survive, to endure. Psychiatry mostly exists to reinforce the dominant hegemonic definitions and systems of relations, to serve the dominant hegemonic interests, those of the beneficiary classes. This is why it must, reflexively, define depression as a symptom of some biological dysfunction producing a loss of connection with reality, rather than as a reasonable response to a greater connection with reality, a heightened awareness of reality. It is only dysfunctional in terms of the dominant hegemonic interests. The death of the slave only represents a loss for the master. For the slave death represents freedom from their life of suffering and exploitation. This is the context in which 'noble lies' of hell and other 'fates worse than death', heaven, and Karma, and taboos and laws against suicide originally emerged. It is still the driving motive for their reproduction. The beneficiary classes are loathe to see those who produce the value that they consume, the luxuries, powers, and privileges they enjoy, from destroying what for them is merely one more form of capital. Thus laws against euthanasia are effectively a continuation of slavery laws.

Personal problems as friends and welcome distractions

People often unconsciously nurture, their personal problems as a means to distract their attention from the greater, apparently unmanageable problems of the world. In this way obesity, relationship or financial problems, can provide a welcome focus, and sense of order and manageability. We can fool ourselves that once we get our particular problems under control, we will be happy, free from the burden of loneliness, debts and obesity. This gives us a light at the end of the tunnel, the feeling that our lives are manageable, and happiness is attainable. We often fear losing these problems. Success can force the undeniable realization that being thin, in a relationship, and financially independent don't bring the happiness we had hoped. It can force us to widen our focus outwards, to face the overwhelmingly unmanageable, universe of problems.

This can explain the phenomenon whereby people appear to hang onto their problems, and never manage to solve them. It may be more accurate to say that they manage to never solve them. Problems provide a sort of comfort zone, a welcome distraction and focus, and source of realizable hopes and dreams. Success is often a debilitating and depressing experience, as it represents the recognition that happiness is not so simply attained, if at all attainable. Only the successful can fully comprehend this. For the rest of us, we can go on dreaming that once our ship comes in, everything will be ok. Once we have lost those kilos, won lotto, and found the perfect partner, we will be happy. Anticipation, or 'readiness, is all' (Shakespeare). Our hopes, dreams, and aspirations provide us with more value as ends in themselves, than as means.

Must give us pause

Imagine battery hens observing humans praying for mercy and justice, after having been forced by them to endure their entire lives never having been able to move more than a few centimeters, never having experience fresh air or natural sunlight, living their entire lives above piles of their own stinking excrement, and doomed to a horrific death once their egg production falls. Or a calf that has lived all its life in a concrete box, awaiting a death by gassing, as a 'byproduct' of the dairy industry. Or a sheep that has just had flesh torn and ripped off around its anus, and its testes cut off, in the name of 'good animal husbandry' and new woolen socks. Or some fully conscious 'test animals' enduring vivisection, or the ferret fetus having its eyes removed, to allow some 'scientist' to satisfy their curiosity, or some company to pander to its shareholder's demands for profits by pandering to our vanity and denial of our mortality. Surely it cannot just be me that notes the perversity, the absurdity, the hypocrisy. There is no necessity to justify or excuse our abuse of our power Vis a Vis animals in these ways. Our motives are greed, vanity, and hubris.

Can Vs Should

People who eat meat often argue that it is natural and normal. They somehow extrapolate from this that it is ethically unproblematic. We can eat meat, we have teeth and a digestive system that facilitates this. Somehow this is supposed to be an ethical, even 'moral' argument. Applying the same logic, we would have to consider any human activity which is possible, and for which precedents or traditions exists, as equally 'moral'. This would then include murder, rape, and theft. They are all equally 'natural' among opportunistic predators. Referring to the 'food chain' is merely a veiled form of arguing that 'right is might'.

The food chain 'argument' would, if applied consistently, recommend that we allow viruses, bacteria, and other parasites to 'consume' us, as they are in fact at the top of the 'food chain'. It is typical for interlocutors to dismiss analogies that are inconvenient, to claim that the analogy is a bad one, that the implications of one set of relations cannot be transferred to another, that there is no analogy to be made between the relations or experiences. This is often, of course, a disingenuous ploy aimed at dismissing inconvenient though compelling arguments.

The 'reductio ad absurdum'

The 'reductio ad absurdum' is employed to find common ground from which to begin your argument. You begin with a simple or extreme example in which the point you wish to make is clearly apparent, and to which your interlocutor can easily agree in principle. You then to work back towards your objective, a more subtle and complex case in which the point is less clear, and the principle less easy to grasp or agree on. In my experience, if a person does not like the conclusion they have come to, they will simply deny that the principle that is valid in the simple case is not transferable to the more complicated or subtle one.

People will ultimately believe what they want to believe. If they are not willing to go along with you, you will have to accept this as a sad fact of human nature. This is one of the frustrations facing philosophers. You can only present the clearest case for what you are trying to demonstrate. You are not response-able for your interlocutor's reason(s)ing. It is best to break off such unproductive interactions. Write up your argument and publish it. They may reconsider it later, in private, where they have no fear of 'losing face' for being 'wrong'.

Overcoming Keynes: in the long run we are all alive, everyone, and everything

Keynes, the famous economist, whose recommendations have recently been implemented to prevent the recession becoming a depression, is most famous for his observation that 'in the long run we are all dead'. This is what prevents most politicians from implementing common sense long term economic policies. The voters will not support long run policies, as they cannot expect to benefit from them. In the long run, they will be dead. Thus the focus of politics and economic policy has tended to be on the immediate and short-term. Hence we have energy policies that result in global-warming. Hence we have boom and bust economic cycles under which the least powerful members of society suffer the greatest.

My 'Optimal Ethic Generator' could solve this age-old threat to economic rationality. I began my quest hoping to save the world via economics. So it is fitting that I now come full circle, and solve the oldest economic problem of all time. How to get people to consider the long-term in their economic decisions. If we all believed we would continually be randomly new-born as any person on this planet, then we would have a compelling emotional motive to consider the holistic long-term implications of our actions and decisions.

Our economic policies would reflect a real balance between our immediate, short-term interests, and our more distant long-term interests. Further, we could have a motive to consider the interests of every member of society. Even further, if we included animals in this random process, which we have no compelling reason not to, then we would all have the emotional motive to eliminate all forms of animal cruelty. We would have the motive to act as Jesus and all the Prophets, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Jain, Buddhist, or animist, have sought to have us act. We would treat all others as if they were ourselves. Because over countless future lives, we will be them.

If I have not been the first to compose most of the arguments I have presented here, then I feel at least that this one innovation of mine is original. I always wanted to invent some technology that would benefit everyone and everything. Of course like all innovations, it builds upon a pre-existing idea. I always wanted to be an architect and builder too, so this is also fine by me. All I can now say is, please consider. In future, when you say good, ask yourself good for what? Good for whom? What is good for you, now, may be bad for you, in your next life, when you are the 'other' who is now paying the price of your current good. 'Hodie mihi, tibi cras'. 'You today, me tomorrow'. The tables will turn.

True values

People 'manage' to have no money for all the things they claim they 'value', such as 'the public good', justice, public education, and 'making the world a better place'. 'We would like to help, but we can't' (after spending all our money on luxuries, novelties, Coca-Cola, entertainments, dining out, status goods, and all manner of other unnecessary goods). Everyone will say, 'someone richer should pay' for all the things they claim to 'value'. We are poor! Of course the richer have greater needs, and have no spare money. Their luxury lifestyles drain all their wealth and income.

The point is, we have an easy measure of what people really care about, what they really value, and that is what they spend their money on. And it is not justice, universal health care, or other people's children's health, education, and welfare. More than anything else, it is our fantasies that reveal our true motives. Most people dream of wealth, privilege, romance, hot sex, and power, rather than a world defined by equality and justice.

Ethics technology: my optimal ethics generator

Imagine you knew for certain that after each life you would be re-incarnated randomly as any creature on this planet. How would you define justice? Who and what would you include as deserving of it? If this belief was adopted as the hegemonic dogma on this planet, what changes do you imagine would take place in our relations with each other, with animals, and with the not-yet-conceived? Random new-births would mean that we would lose our private goods in death, but would re-inherit all the public goods we owned in common. Would we re-produce a society where a minority owned and passed onto their own children, the majority of the world's wealth, privilege, and opportunity?

Imagine if you or your beloved might return to the world as a lab research 'specimen', or battery hen. This would all be consistent with the demonstrable a-morality of this world, while at the same time this belief system would institutionalize ethical behavior. You may benefit now from your inherited privileges, but you would statistically most likely suffer in the long run as you inherit the statistically more prevalent underprivileged inheritances next time around.

You are in the long run more likely to suffer than to benefit from the reproduction and opportunistic exploitation of inequality. You would be more likely to bear the costs of the dominant hegemonic system, than to benefit from it. Holistically enlightened self-interest would naturally and unobtrusively guide everyone towards seeking social justice, solidarity, and eugenics. It would be self-evidently in everyone's interests to do so.

We would ideally be able to prove or assert that awareness is a universal potential that re-emerges after death, randomly, in another life form. If you and your loved ones could come back into any position in society, then you would have a motivation to improve social justice and solidarity for everyone. If we could include animals, this would lead to the elimination of all unnecessary animal cruelty and suffering.

I expect that Republicans and Tories would suddenly find themselves motivated by what they would call 'altruism', but which was merely a recognition of their own interests projected into the future, onto their 'future-selves'. Presently they are the beneficiaries of inequality. However they claim that the current system is best system everyone. It would be revealing to see how much of their rhetoric is conviction and how much is disingenuous specious sophistry.

Of course everyone would need to have some experience of the full range of outcomes of the current system. Many people live in ignorance of the true costs of the current system, as they have never personally experienced them. They have only experienced the benefits. It is satisfying for them to imagine that they have free will, and would manage to fight their way to the top no matter what their inheritance. Therefore they need to be holistically enlightened, and thus able to give holistically informed consent to the status quo, or otherwise.

My Optimal Ethic Generator is similar to **Rawls' (1921-2002) 'veil of ignorance'**. Rawls noted that people would only be motivated to produce a fair, and therefore just, set of social relations if they were ignorant of their own position within that set of social relations. We tend to promote systems of relations we think will benefit us. The only time our intrinsic motivation to serve our own narrow self-interest promotes justice, is when the only way to serve our interests is to promote justice for all. Perhaps one day my Optimal Ethic Generator will become the hegemonic dogma, or we will employ hypnosis or drugs to induce a 'veil of ignorance' in legislators and voters.

As in the case of Freud's siblings, if we cannot secure greater benefits for ourselves, our next best bet will be to ensure no-one can have more than us, to seek an equal distribution of benefits. Where we are ignorant of our own holistic inheritance, we will not be able to promote the interests of people with our particular holistic inheritance. We will be motivated to act as if we cared about others, as without knowledge of who we are, we are the others, for all planning purposes.

Empathy may motivate us occasionally to relieve our empathic suffering by relieving other's suffering, but more often we just turn away, numb ourselves to their condition, and do nothing. Empathy is not a reliable motive, especially when it conflicts with our self-interest. We like to keep what we have. We are not happy sharers by nature. Self-interest is the most reliable motive for action. The 'tobacco-debate' is a clear example of human nature. Ultimately appeals to goodwill and empathy do not work. Enforced laws and 'speed-humps' are needed. We have to make expensive or physically impossible not to act as if we were rational and considerate. Once people are compelled to do the right thing they usually do. And once they do something, they tend to rationalize their motives for doing so, finding justifications and reason(s). This is human nature. Read more in 'Convergences'.

I anticipate that a more social democratic model, similar perhaps to the Scandinavian model, would appeal to most people under a 'veil of ignorance' or my 'optimal ethics generator'. People desire to have the opportunity of benefiting from inequality, but few would risk abject poverty and exclusion from opportunity merely for the chance of obscene wealth. The odds would be against being a beneficiary, seeing how there are billions of people on this planet living in abject poverty, hundreds of millions living as 'wage-slaves' from day to day, and only relatively few middle, upper-middle-class, and wealthy people.

Anyone who would not submit to a hypnotic or pharmaceutical 'veil of ignorance' would demonstrate that their intentions were opportunistic. They would define themselves as unfit to be participating in the decision making process. I await with baited breath what disingenuous specious arguments opponents of this veil of ignorance would have. How would they justify not submitting to the veil? What sort of 'spin doctoring' would they come up with?

Inequality, Rawls 'veil of ignorance' and my own 'Optimal ethics generator'

It is true that the film-star could not dedicate themselves to acting if others did not produce all the value they consumed, all the goods and services they needed to live. If the actor had to provide all their own services, and produce all their own products, they could not dedicate themselves to acting. So why does the actor get paid tens of millions of dollars for a few months' work?

The reflex of this is that there are relatively few people with acting talent and the appearance and personality we find appealing and sympathetic. If these people had to produce all the value they consumed, all the average people would miss out on enjoying their talents. We would, more importantly, miss out on most of the technological goods and services we enjoy, if engineers, designers, and programmers had to devote all their talents and energies to providing for themselves. Most of us have a holistic inheritance that makes it impossible for us to be actors, inventors, engineers, and designers. So we benefit from the existence of our 'betters'. Without them we would have very little value to consume.

Some people, out of envy and jealousy, would rather live in a world where no-one was more talented, attractive, intelligent, or fortunate than themselves. They would be willing to reduce us all down to the lowest common denominator, to achieve equality.

Kurt Vonnegut wrote a satirical novel which described such a society. In this society the beautiful were made ugly, the intelligent made dumb, the talented deprived of their talents, all in the name of equality and justice. This was how this society dealt with the issues of inequality and justice. This sort of dystopia only appeals to those people with the worst holistic inheritances. They have no chance of benefiting from inequality, and hence they 'spin' their jealousy and 'ressentiment' into pseudo-principles of justice and equality.

Beauty, intelligence, talent, and good fortune can prove negative qualities for their possessor due to the envy, jealousy, and Schadenfreude (malicious glee), victimization and mobbing of their fellow humans. This is a very Daoistic observation! See 'Religion' for details.

However my aim is to improve everyone's holistic inheritance, to achieve more equality, by attempting to lift everyone up to the highest levels. This will merely require that those without positive holistic inheritances will be denied the right to reproduce themselves.

If actors really do, as they claim, love to entertain us, then would they still do so if we paid them no more than twice the average income? Surely if they love their work, they would prefer to act in films than clean public toilets. Surely it is not necessary to reward people with hundreds of millions of dollars? And if they were not paid exorbitantly, they would have to work for a living like everyone else.

Given the choice between acting and most other jobs, surely they would still act. They would enjoy more non-fiduciary benefits, more 'perks', than in most other jobs. My point is that we could have a fairer distribution of windfalls, without having to miss out on most of the value we today enjoy. Inequality is necessary to motivate people, the question is merely how much inequality is necessary, and how much is optimal.

Would, under a 'veil of ignorance', most actors vote for such 'moderation', unaware of their own personal holistic inheritance? And taking a longer-term perspective, would they vote for such moderation if they anticipated being randomly new-born as any social-actor in their next lives, for an eternity?

Engineering fundamentals

An engineer engineers on the basis of their knowledge of the properties of things, and of the propergents of those things in interaction. Engineers seek to holistically optimize the propergents that emerge when individual components are combined into greater and more complex structures. Engineers recognize that both the materials, and the methods by which they are combined into greater structures, together account for the success of a project. An engineer can seek to compensate for poor materials with great designs, but this is not the ideal situation. Ideally as much engineering will go into the materials as the design.

The determination of objectives for the project is of course the most political. Politics is the arena in which competing interest groups, and the definitions reflexive of these interests, compete. Determining who will do the work, and who will reap the rewards and benefits, is a continuation of this politics. Conventionally, those with the power will use it to ensure the collective produces the goods and services that they want. Those without power will pay the costs. Those with power will appropriate the benefits.

The selection of engineers to be employed on a task is critical to the success of the project. Competing engineers have competing motivations and objectives. These are rarely transparent. Engineers will often seek to misrepresent themselves, their objectives, and the distributions of costs and benefits that will emerge from their planned projects. We must be wary of being seduced by desirable yet unattainable promises about what can be achieved. Every project will have benefits and costs.

We must interrogate applicants to determine whose interests they will consider, what referents are being adopted in their cost-benefit analyses. Engineers must be aware of the limits within which they are operating. They must be able to demonstrate the intention and ability to take the best advantage of the opportunity sets available.

They must demonstrate a capacity for optimizing the outcomes of the project, for all the participants, direct and indirect. Projects produce 'externalities', costs or benefits arising as byproducts of the project. Our project managers must be aware of the externalities of their project, and provide plans for producing the optimal 'basket' of costs and benefits for all of these referents. The engineer must have contingency plans in place to manage unforeseen problems.

The intrinsic cost of reproducing things as they are

We must recognize the costs of not doing something before we will be able to readily accept the more obvious costs of doing it. Most of the interdependent notions of function, purpose, meaning, creation, and god, arise from the fact that most humans need to justify their endurance of lives which have no intrinsic positive value to them.

Of course the good life can seem within the reach of everyone, if only they work hard enough. This perception is a function of the seductive mystification of the media, our need to believe such myths, and the intrinsic nature of our egos which tell us that we are special and deserving to be among the small minority of people enjoying the good life. This is what defines the aspirational voter that right wing politics appeals to. If the underprivileged believe they are on the verge of becoming privileged, then they will want to maintain inequality and privileges, so that they can themselves benefit from them, when their time comes, when 'their ship comes in'.

Holistically unenlightened people focus on personal benefits and advantages, rather than on principles such as justice or equality. People allow themselves to be seduced into believing that they can reach the top of the pile. People may recognize that they are currently paying the costs, but they imagine they will soon be enjoying the benefits, while others continue paying the costs. They will not see it as in their interests to change the system just now that they are on the verge of benefiting from it.

This is the verge that the media will seek to keep the aspirational voter on. Happy days are just around the corner, just be patient, go along, and you'll get along. Your ship is coming in, just don't change horses mid-race, don't change ships mid-stream, don't rock the boat, or you might sink your ship.

Hegemonic sustaining (aspirational) myths of upward mobility

The media celebrate the occasional instance of upward mobility, the exception, and then construct it as a defining property of our market based capitalism, and of the current system of relations in general. Any instances of upward mobility are in fact minor exceptions to the rule. We have considered in previous chapters that people want to believe they can make it, and those who have inherited all the necessary ingredients for success in this world like to believe they have earned it. More importantly, they want others to believe they have earned it, to therefore make their privileges, luxuries, and influence 'legitimate'. Those who have it want those who don't have it think that if they work hard for those who have it, they can have it too. In fact all they do is produce more value for those who already have it.

The real meaning of 'upward mobility' is more ironic. The only upward mobility experienced in general will be by those who already have wealth and privileges. What it is that is upwardly mobile is the value that labor produces, which is taken from them and passed up to the owners of capital, and up the socio-economic-status hierarchy in general. It is sadly a basic principal in nature, called gravity, which in the context of upward mobility of privilege and power appears ironic, that those that have more will gain more. The more you have the more you will get.

As the bible says, 'to he who has, even more shall be given, and from he that has little, even the little that he has shall be taken away'. It is the principle of attraction. Pretty much everyone has 'bought into' the hegemonic con of 'meritocracy', and are busy striving away producing more wealth for their masters. Of course general living standards do appear to improve by some measures, and this seems to substantiate the myth.

But what people fail to consider is the opportunity cost, the much greater improvements in the general standard of living that would have been achieved under a more just system. Solidarity would mean getting what you have earned, rather than what you have merely been given, what you have inherited.

Whether we are currently experiencing the best of all possible worlds

The question of whether we are currently behaving in an optimizing way is of course paramount. If we are doing the best we could possibly do given the reality of our natures and the nature of our realities, then it would be counterproductive to change. It would also be unfair to give false hope to people, only to disappoint them. They might start a family based on the promise of a brighter future that will never come. It is this false hope that keeps people enduring their lives, and reproducing their misery, merely to serve, more or less exclusively, the interests of a privileged minority, the beneficiary classes.

Promoting and discouraging social change

Members of the small minority who are living the good life, one justifiable in itself, by nature of the rewards life provides them with, will experience the status quo as optimal. Those who expect to enter into that minority will also have a vested interest in the current state of affairs. The successful minority are likely to have significant influence within the society, and will use it to avoid the threat of losing what they have. They will resist changes that threaten their privileges. Those aspiring and expectant of entry into the good life will act as public relations agents and police officers for the present order, to maintain it as it is, so that they too can enjoy its privileges when their time comes.

Luxury and poverty, or justice for all?

Remember that what may represent an improvement for the general population may represent a loss for the minority currently benefiting from the present order. For this reason we must determine what it is that we find more desirable, a life justifiable in itself for every member of society, or a life that is fantastically luxurious and rewarding for a few, but at the cost of a life not justifiable in itself, for the majority. This is a question not only about making the biggest, tastiest, healthiest pie possible, given the available ingredients, but of the distribution of the work involved in baking it, and the determination of how much pie each member of society will get to enjoy.

Endorsement and securing of social resources

Social actors with the urge to 'reproduce' themselves will seek to have the practice of having children endorsed as a 'moral' one, a social 'good'. As such it would be deserving of praise and public resources. The necessary reflexive counterpoint to this endorsement is the definition of persons who do not procreate as 'selfish'. This definition can compel others to reproduce, and generate a social norm of reproduction.

Few people ever admit publicly that their act of procreation was in hindsight selfish. It appears human nature to wish one's own defeats and mistakes on others. This lessens our burden of guilt and prevents others from defining us as inferior. It allows us to revise our experience as merely 'normal' and 'human'.

Those that decide procreation in their circumstances would be unethical are effectively excluded from participation in discourses about the ethics of procreation, by being defined as selfish. They can at best remain passive about the whole issue, and failing that, endure the infuriatingly fatuous discourses which heroicize the essentially selfish act of private procreation.

Virtual karma

When we exploit those with less power than us, how can we ever claim to be 'innocent'? How can we claim to deserve justice when we behave unjustly? How can we demand justice and mercy when we do not give it? How can we expect others to behave differently to us? How can we expect people to be honest with us when we lie to them? When our only 'principle' is opportunism, it will be impossible to trust anyone. We will waste our energy and resources on managing deceit, through legal systems, lawyers, courts, police, security services and devices, and insurance. It is no basis for a sane, optimal society, or positive life experience.

The Caste System and the Feudal system

Through trade relations and invasions, Persians, Greeks, Scythians, Bactrians, Sakas, Khusanas, and Huns, among other ethnic groups, entered India and were gradually absorbed into Hindu society. They were assigned places in the caste system according to their physical or mental aptitudes. Stories indicate that originally, when a Brahmin did not live up to his virtues, he was demoted, and a Sudra or lower caste person who showed Brahmin qualities and conduct was promoted.

One of the Upanishads narrates the story of Satyakama, a boy who wanted to study the Vedas, a privilege accorded only to those conceived into the Brahmin caste. When the boy asked his mother about his lineage, she said: 'I do not know, my child, of what ancestry you are. In my youth I was preoccupied with many duties and with attending when I conceived you. I do not know of what ancestry you are.' When the teacher whom Satyakama approached for Vedic knowledge heard this, he was impressed with the boy's truthfulness and outspoken nature and concluded that his father must have been a Brahmin.

The Brahmins had a monopoly of the knowledge of the scriptures, which was the source of their power. Ultimately they became greedy and began to take advantage of this monopoly to opportunistically exploit the lower castes and accumulate economic and political power, and privileges. The Western equivalent of the Caste system was of course the feudal system, with its serfs and slaves. The ruling elites monopolized the Bible scriptures in the same way that the Brahmin class did. Instead of using their superiority to help those weaker and less able, they opportunistically exploited their inherited inequalities to accumulate wealth, power, and privilege for themselves.

If you ever consider producing dogma, beware that even your best of intentions 'are oft to go astray'. Assuming people are 'good' and therefore failing to eliminate opportunities for the abuse of power is naive and dangerous, as history has shown anyone who cares to witness.

Class and caste as 'concentration' camps

Class and caste ensure the accumulation and concentration of wealth, privilege, and status over generations. They exclude an ever proportionally larger population from privilege. They concentrate, over generations, wealth and power within an ever, proportionally, smaller population of 'beneficiaries'.

Marketing and Public Relations construct positive definitions of their 'clients'

Marketing has the intention of making its subject/object defined as desirable by a target audience, a 'demographic'. A 'demographic' is a group defined in terms of gender, age, socio-economic status, marital status, ethnicity, geographical location, religious affiliation, political affiliation, membership of particular organizations, discretionary income, and so on. Public relations aims to have its 'client' defined as positive, good, and desirable by their target 'demographic', or audience. Both employ the meanings of their audiences to successfully motivate or manipulate this audience into defining the product or corporation favorably. The 'product' could be a political party, a war, a parliamentary bill, a washing powder, or an institution such as 'parenthood'.

They will attempt to redefine reality when it challenges their public relations goals. They will employ all their resources and strategies to manage the public perception, to construct the desired 'public opinion'. It is a form of impression management. A whole vocabulary has developed of what have been called 'weasel words'. They will employ 'spin doctoring', and attempt to put a positive 'spin' on things that are actually negative. They will try to put everything that might have a negative impact on their client's public image in a positive light.

When the U.S and its allies bomb Afghan and Iraqi towns, and people die, they don't talk of murder, they talk of 'collateral damage'. When doctors kill not-yet-born babies they call them 'fetuses' and the murder is called the 'termination of a pregnancy'. A pregnancy is a process, not a person. This denies that a living, sentient person was in fact legally murdered. This is how our society weasels its way out of murder. Only 'people' can be murdered. Even a pet rat has more legal protections than a not-yet-born person. You can't kill 'collateral'. You can only damage it. Such abuses of language do more damage than any Nazi propaganda ever did or will. Remember they are 'selling' us war.

All marketing and public relations activities are directed at 'priming', manufacturing a bias in a target audience. The public are manipulated. A synthetic reality is fabricated, one in which the 'product', political party or politician, war, organization, or consumer good or service, is defined as a 'desirable' thing. As such PR seeks to influence public opinion in favor of whoever is employing the PR or Marketing agency. Lobby groups employ PR and marketing agencies to influence the political decision making process. Every industry and organization maintains some form of lobbying activities. The Christian fundamentalists lobby in the same way as the tobacco industry.

The most clever and effective PR and marketing is 'unobtrusive'. We don't even realize that we are being manipulated, that something is being marketed to us, that we are being seduced by a PR campaign. The ultimate PR is that which becomes accepted as part of the Hegemonic system of definitions. Of course the most ubiquitous and insidious PR is that which is a product of the hegemonic system of relations itself. When we talk about 'defining' things, we are also talking about defining things as desirable and undesirable.

PR that has become part of our social fabric has become 'institutionalized' into the 'hegemonic' or dominant system of defining and relating. Hegemony imposes, subtly and unobtrusively, a 'synthetic' reality, a social reality upon us. We consume it passively for the most part, and in doing so unwittingly re-produce it. We unknowingly act as the means to others ends. We are not allowed informed consent.

I chose to categorize 'synthetic reality' as a sub-category of 'social reality', as it is constructed by PR agencies with a specific goal in mind. Of course the distinction is 'arbitrary', as all outcomes are products of the same underlying interactions. They are all proper agents. The only difference is that some social actors are actually aware that they are actively producing and re-producing particular definitions, particular 'subjective realities'.

Social reality in general emerges so subtly that few people are aware that it is anything but, well, reality. Synthetic reality is consciously 'synthesized' with intended objectives and deliberate strategies and processes. We can interrogate it much easier, and identify its proponents, the 'clients' and their PR agencies. We can trace each step,

and identify each motive and strategy. We can even measure the outcomes, through market research and public opinion polling.

Of course synthetic reality, when successful, becomes social reality. It becomes part of the taken for granted background to our daily interactions, to our decision making and defining activities. It becomes a part of the landscape of ubiquitous, taken for granted assumptions we use as the basis for all our interactions and definitions. It constitutes the raw materials with which we construct 'meanings'.

The ultimate PR produces a hegemonic domination of our system of definitions, and defining practices. We are not conscious that some people have the power to manipulate how we think and behave. We are not aware that we are 'consuming' their 'product'. We accept the 'social reality' we have inherited, and therefore re-produce it.

Right now social reality, via synthetic reality, is being constructed for us. By for us, I don't mean 'in our interests'. It is being constructed for our consumption, in the interests of the privileged and powerful. Right now lobbyists and PR agencies offer us an insight into how social reality is constructed. We can observe the 'card-trick' as it is being set up. We can observe the teleological loops before they close in on each other, and become seamless. We can see what the tricks are. We should take advantage of this opportunity, and then apply what we learn here to the de-construction of the social realities that we have inherited.

The appeal of synthetic identities such as race, ethnicity, religion, and nationality

The weaker the personal identity a person has, the more attractive they find synthetic ones such as race, ethnicity, and nationality. These also have more appeal for the lowest SES groups with the lowest self-esteem. They can only build up their own sense of worth by associating with some group identity. Most Neo-Nazi's fall into this category. As groups are more easily lead and manipulated than individuals, political leaders are always keen to construct a sense of group identity, based on language, religion, skin-color, or any other difference that can be exploited to this end.

The slightest differences can be exploited and embellished. Blue eyes and blond hair were constructed into an Aryan race by the Nazis. You will note as you travel the world the many variations upon the same religious dogmas. These slight differences are deliberately embellished, to produce artificial differences between nations and ethnic groups, in order to construct an 'us' and a 'them'. I have explained the significance of this elsewhere in detail.

Mitlaufen, propaganda, collective ignorance, and group dynamics

It is absolutely vital to comprehend how mitlaufen, propaganda, and collective ignorance, together with general group dynamics interact to the disadvantage of humanity in general.

The German term 'mitlaufen', 'to run with' refers to the opportunism innate to human nature. People tend to 'go along, to get along'. They will chase with the hounds, and run with the fox. The principle is merely that of convenience and apparent self-interest. When they happen to be the fox, they will complain of being the victim, but as soon as they are given the chance, they will be joining the hounds. The victims are no better than the perpetrators.

Mitlaufen, or 'jumping on the bandwagon', rather than ideological commitment, accounts for most participation in social movements and large scale social action. We must seek to understand the phenomena of the mitlaufer due to its devastating role in history, and its potential for allowing history to be re-produced.

Many people will go along with what is going on just to get along. Others fear being victimized formally and informally. They do not want to become targets themselves. Would you stick your head out for someone else and risk the disapproval, rejection, abandonment, and even the active victimization of your friends and colleagues?

Would you risk losing the material benefits and rewards of group membership? Could you live without the approval and acceptance of your colleagues? Have you ever believed in anything strongly enough to take such risks? Do you fear what consequences your behavior might have for those you love and care about?

Propaganda is an instance of the use of lies to motivate a group's members to act in ways they otherwise wouldn't, or at least to appeal to and exploit their existing prejudices and emotions, to incite them to do their worst.

Collective ignorance is the phenomena produced when people merely 'go along with' agenda Y, believing others are committed to it, and not wanting to 'rock the boat', when in fact no-one is genuinely committed to agenda Y. Everyone is merely acting as if they are, on the assumption, which seems to be validated by every else's behavior, that everyone else is committed to that agenda. People rarely talk about their problems. Everyone assumes no-one else is having problems. In reality most people experience similar problems. They just aren't talking about them. People then assume that these problems must be personal, rather than systemic. No-one wants to be the only one having (admitting to) problems, so everyone pretends they aren't having any (either). This merely reinforces the collective ignorance of widespread, systemic, problems.

People don't want to look like failures when everyone else seems to be having no problems. This means that couples will pretend their marriages are fine, wives will pretend their husbands don't beat them, husbands will pretend their wives satisfy them sexually, employees will pretend there are no problems in organizations, and management will happily support the same 'impression'.

If no-one else is having problems, then if I say I am having problems, then people will think I am incompetent, either as a partner or employee. Many sit-coms, and series such as 'desperate housewives' are so popular because they remove the veil from this collective ignorance, and show real people having real problems. The people are not 'losers', they are just like you and me, and even better, appear to be more successful and happier than we are, when in fact they are just as 'desperate'.

Getting back to organizations and our terrible human history, we can see how a spiral of ever greater behavioral commitment may arise as individuals, out of fear of being defined or recognized as dissidents, disloyal, or uncommitted, constantly seek to outdo each other with ever more extreme behaviors. In this sense extreme group behaviors may arise without any personal ideological commitments. Extremist groups may in fact consist of individuals ideologically opposed to the groups stated aims.

Particular individuals may be opposed to ideas or practices but feel alone in their opposition due to collective ignorance, and therefore keep quiet, or demonstrate even greater apparent commitment, out of a fear that the others may recognize their doubts or dissent and exclude or punish them. It may be that the others are behaving in a similar fashion. This may account for some German accounts of how much of the Occupied France administration behaved as if they were more ideologically committed to the Nazi pogroms than the Germans themselves.

Do you really believe that if you had been a German in Nazi Germany, that you would have behaved any differently to the mass of the population? Have you ever victimized or bullied anyone, or stood by while others did? How did you justify your behavior to yourself? Were they 'asking for it'? Is that just the way of the world? Did you argue along the lines of 'why sacrifice yourself when nothing good will come of it, because you are powerless to change anything?'

Do you think there are big injustices and little injustices? Do you think that you can let the little things pass, but that you will suddenly change behavior when the big things come along? Or more to the point, do you expect others to? Do you expect they will defend your rights when you become the next victim? Will you self-righteously point the finger at them when they do nothing to help you?

Do you 'feel' that your interests are intrinsically superior to the interests of others? Can your individual behavior be taken out of the bigger picture, and treated in isolation? Is your dogma superior to other's dogma? Can you control the genie once it is let loose, close Pandora's Box once it is opened? Can you violate principles in particular, while maintaining their integrity in general? Can you have your cake and eat it too. Can you get away with your opportunism and still expect others to behave principledly?

Do you think the world will become other than you behave? Do you think you can reap a harvest other than what you have sown? Do you think others will do the right thing by you, while you secretly get away with doing wrong to others? Do you think you will be done unto, other than you have done to? Are you, through your actions, producing a world that you would like to inherit, or bequeath your children? Can we have one rule for ourselves, and another for others? Can we define other's behaviors as violent, while defining our violence as harmless, justified, legitimate, even necessary, or even simply deny that it even is violence?

The missionary's motivations and rewards

I feel that many people who do not possess a real faith, seek to convince themselves by trying to convince others. People who cannot find a positive meaningful definition for their lives seek one in evangelical missionizing. It gives them a sense of positive purpose. People feel their best when they are confidently working towards goals. Missionizing and evangelizing provides some people with a remedy for their own lack of achievable goals. What greater goal could one have than spreading the word about eternal life and happiness? Dogma provides the certainty, and the ideal goal. This said, I believe that anyone with genuine faith, with real conviction, would be blessed with true happiness, and would spend their lives spreading this faith, and acting on their convictions. They would abandon worldly pursuits and focus on the only thing of lasting value, eternal salvation.

Off-the-record 'whistle-blowing'

In my experience the media are simply driven by self-interest, rather than any interest in revealing injustice. Whistle-blowers are usually ignored, due to conflicts of interests between the owners of the media, the sources of marketing revenue for the media, or due to the laziness of so-called 'reporters'. Perhaps the best response to this situation is simply to provide 'tip-offs' and 'insider information' to all the media you can contact, and leave it to them. If they are motivated and competent, these tips will provide them with the most productive, insightful, provocative, and creative questions to ask, and the most profitable and fertile directions to begin investigations.

This limits pointless exposures to victimization and mobbing for the whistle-blower. Of course ideally the government and private enterprise would reward whistle-blowers for their efforts. And this does occur in the health industry, and occasionally in general life. However for the most part whistleblowers are punished for doing the right thing. This is one reason so few people ever behave according to authentic principles, or to put it more simply, they operate exclusively according to the principle of opportunism and narrow, immediate self-interest. Go with the flow. Don't rock the boat. Lauf mit! Decision making

All decision making occurs under imperfect conditions. It must be noted that at the very minimum, any basis for decision making is better than none. The inability to reach decisions can paralyze an organism, an organization, a society. Remember the analogy of the mule that starved to death as it couldn't decide on which offer of food to take? The profit motive and capitalism do provide a frame-work for relatively fluid interactions.

That, under capitalism, some groups gain power and use it to serve their own narrow vested interests, is not unique to this form of economic organization. Under the forms of socialism that have historically been realized, the power basis merely shifted from capital to party-political power. No significant qualitative differences in relation to the abuse of power, or the accumulation of privilege, were evident.

The forms of socialism so far realized have failed to provide systems of relations to motivate innovation and effort. For this reason there were merely fewer material privileges to be appropriated by the privileged 'communist' party members. In principle, at the highest levels, capitalism and Soviet Socialism were defined by opportunism and privilege. At the lower levels the Soviets managed a greater deal of equity of opportunities and outcomes. The problem was that the system did not provide sufficient motivations to produce enough opportunities and outcomes to distribute. It defied human nature. See 'Convergences' for details.

Even worse, it victimized the most potentially productive of its citizens out of fear of dissidence and 'social' innovation. It provided few incentives for innovation and hard work. It came to be defined by denial. There was no competition to hold it accountable. It protected itself from accountability, from competition, for as long as it could, until it went into crisis. The system collapsed. It failed. As with all organizations defined by cultures of denial, the external reality eventually forces the acknowledgment of problems. The real problem was the denial. There were officially no problems. If there are no problems then no solutions will be sought. There weren't, and none were.

Naive Orwell's animals were victims

Orwell's animals in 'Animal Farm' are for the most part innocent victims of their leaders. This would indicate that Orwell remained a 'true believer', merely blaming the Bolsheviks for the problems the Soviets experienced. Thus he would belong to those who naively want to imagine that Socialism was simply a great idea poorly implemented. Marx idealized the workers as the victims of the oppression of the ruling classes. The reality is that opportunism is human nature. In fact if human nature had been as noble as Marx wants us to believe, then the Soviet system would have been successful despite poor leadership. There was nothing stopping people from working hard to serve the common good.

You can't fight the laws of motivation

Social engineers have attempted to impose inauthentic or 'synthetic' motivations and social relationships upon groups and individuals. These 'affected' forms of motivation and interaction contradict individual and social psychology. The authentic forms of motivation and interaction eventually emerge and subvert the externally imposed ones. Many attempts at principle driven social engineering have failed for this reason.

The fundamental motivational principles of human psychology can perhaps be summarized by Expectations Theory. People will be motivated to engage in a particular activity if they feel that engaging in that activity has a good chance of producing outcomes they desire. We motivate people by producing the belief in them that by doing what we are asking them to do, they will get what they want.

Humans are prone to having faith in beliefs that have no chance of delivering the satisfactions they promise, and the actor desires. It is the belief that motivates, the faith. Of course a history of facilitating the satisfaction of desires will increase a system of relations' credibility. If a behavior has brought satisfaction in the past, then people will be motivated to reproduce this behavior in the future. If following someone's advice brought satisfaction in the past, then we are likely to follow their advice in the future. If the general has won apparently 'unwinnable' victories in the past, we are more likely to follow him into new, equally apparently unwinnable battles. If 'god' has proven his support of this general, and the church has blessed him, then we will also put our faith in him.

Ataturk, the 'father' of modern Turkey, overcame incredible odds in surviving the First World War. Hitler was a messenger on the front lines. He earned the Iron Cross for bravery. Ataturk led his men to victory in the Dardanelles, against incredible odds. Both of them had fair reasons to define their survival as especially meaningful and significant. They both felt that destiny, history, or god, had protected them, in order for them to fulfill some grand destiny. This belief motivated them in the face of later impossible odds. Interestingly, both were fighting A.N.Z.A.C's.

Human motivation is based on expectations. If you desire X, and expect that doing Y will result in you attaining X, then you will be motivated to do Y. If Y brought the satisfaction of X in the past, then you will expect it to bring X in the future.

The priests will tell you that in some far off past, the gods, through their prophets, told their people to do X. They got Y! The people stopped obeying their gods/prophets word, and they lost Y. If they want Y, then they must return to the old ways, and start doing X again. They will tell them what X is. The priests have a monopoly on this sacred X. God gave them the sacred X. Only they can interpret the sacred texts of X. Part of X is to give the priests the best of the best.

The Soviet Socialist model did not deliver Y, through its X dogma. One problem was that the Communist Party opportunistically abused its power to gain privileges for itself at the expense of the workers whose interests it claimed to represent. The Soviets replaced one form of capitalist exploitation for another. Under the Soviets, the old capital of land, money, and talent, was replaced with the new capital of communist party membership.

The communist party destroyed illusions of solidarity through its particular brand of opportunism. When you destroy solidarity then you destroy most of that most precious resource known as goodwill. Why should I toil and suffer so that others can opportunistically take advantage of my goodwill? The Soviets destroyed the pool of goodwill that socialism, let alone communism, are absolutely dependent upon. In the absence of goodwill the state rules merely through terror, gulags, secret police, propaganda, mind-control, and force.

Humans are motivated to invest effort and make sacrifices if they expect or believe that in doing so they will get things they value. Of course ultimately they believe that these things will be satisfying, or make them happy, so it is the end state of feeling satisfied or happy that is motivational. Ironically it is often the failure to attain these

objectives that maintains the motivation. Most things that we believe will make us happy and satisfy us do not do so. Thus it took a Buddha born to a life of privilege, luxury, the satisfaction of all his desires, to recognize that life is ultimately dis-satisfying. As Schopenhauer made clear, human desire is insatiable, a 'leaking bucket', and hence we are doomed to misery.

Thus the most motivational feeling is that you are on your way to attaining the object or state of your desire. Fantasy, the imagination of how good it will feel, is the more rewarding part of reality. All states have costs and benefits. It is easy to exaggerate the benefits and dismiss the costs of what we don't have. We tend to do the opposite with what we do have, focusing on the costs more than the benefits.

The Soviets failed to produce the expectation in their people that by working hard they would get what they wanted. The people lost faith in the system. The people were not motivated to work hard. They stopped working hard. They stopped producing value. There was less and less value for them to consume. They lost even more motivation. A vicious cycle set in.

Eventually the system collapsed. The system could not produce value, even with the employment of coercive regimes of terror and violence. Force motivates the avoidance of pain. Force does not motivate people to produce value. Once the people lose faith in a government they shut down. Terror and force may compel them to go through the movements, but it cannot motivate them.

In democratic societies a new government is re-elected. In Dictatorships, either the military or some other already present political grouping opportunistically take over, or the people rebel and deny the government their labor supply, their legitimacy, and their authority. In reality, however, this last stage is merely superficial. The people refused their legitimation of the system when they lost their motivation. As soon as they lost faith in the system, lost the expectation that it would deliver the things they desired, they withdrew their effort and sacrifice.

It is the vision that the leadership inspire that ultimately legitimates its power. The leadership must motivate their followers by instilling faith and belief in their methods and approaches. People must be convinced that if they follow their leader's recommendations, they will attain that which they desire.

They will make sacrifices, and invest their efforts, following practices, protocols, rules, conventions, and ideas set down for them by their leaders, if they expect that by doing so they will get what they want. They will adopt, internalize, validate, naturalize, and normalize the dominant hegemonic sets of reflexive definitions and systems of relations.

They will 'toe the official line' and subscribe to the dominant hegemonic social reality. They will put pressure on anyone who doesn't to conform. They will help the dominant hegemonic powers identify 'traitors', 'subversives', and 'revolutionaries'. They will applaud the dominant hegemonic powers when they 'round up the dissidents' and send them off for 're-education' to the gulags.

The politically opportunistic leader can defy reality for some time, as long as it maintains 'total spectrum domination' with its propaganda and social reality. It can employ terror and violence to deter opposition and dissidence. It can maintain its hegemony as long as it can maintain a popular belief in its efficacy, even long after it can demonstrate any efficacy at delivering on its promises, and even long after apparent corruption and incompetence has become more or less 'common' if tacit, knowledge.

The truly principled, inspired leader will have an enlightened vision. The inspired holistically enlightened leader will recognize that their challenge is to share that vision. Their challenge is to maintain that most precious of human resources, goodwill. This will only be maintained through solidarity. Solidarity will only be achieved through a transparent, just, fair, and equitable society.

The holistically enlightened leader will recognize that material benefits and rewards are important. However the holistically enlightened leader will recognize that human desire is insatiable, and that the real security and satisfactions are inter-personal, rather than material. It is the quality of our relationships with each other that bring the ultimate sense of security and satisfaction. Narcissistic materialism is ultimately unrewarding, and in fact cold and empty. The inspired leader will motivate their society to produce things of real and lasting value.

The holistically enlightened leader will eliminate opportunities for opportunism. People are by nature opportunists. The fewer opportunities they have to exercise their 'darker' sides the better. The fewer moral hazards and temptations they have the better. No-one can be allowed to inherit and accumulate privileges out of proportion to the effort and sacrifice they themselves have invested in their society. In order to be optimally motivated people need to get what they deserve, a fair return for their effort and sacrifice. By ensuring more or less equality of holistic inheritances, meritocracy can produce the ultimate motivation. People will get what they have worked for, and not just what they were unlucky or lucky to inherit. Such a leader will recognize that all principles are indivisible. Principles are principles or they are worthless.

Jesus was apparently such a leader. He stressed principles. Love one another, as I have loved you. Treat the least amongst you as if they were I. Principles. It is through service to others that we serve ourselves best. The problem is that you have to extract the truth from all the dogma. It is no point sacrificing yourself to other peoples' opportunism. People will merely take advantage of you. The thing must be approached holistically. We have to break the bubble. We have to search amongst the debris of the burst bubble for things of value, things worth keeping. We must produce a new society, not merely reproduce the old ones.

Goodwill is the most valuable treasure we have. Opportunism destroys goodwill. Only solidarity can prevent opportunism. It is our nature to seek out opportunism. We must deny this part of our natures the potential for expression. Solidarity means opportunities. These opportunities will be universal. We will all have opportunities to produce real value for ourselves, our loved ones, and our community in general.

There is another, equally challenging dimension to motivation. The problem with equality is not just that we do not actually *want* it. We opportunistically seek out statuses, privileges, and inequality. We seek to be superior, rather than equal. The other problem is that it does not exist at the moment. We currently inherit not just social and economic inequality, but also genetic inequality. We don't just inherit unequal access to opportunities. We also inherit unequal potentials with which to benefit from those opportunities. One person need only invest a little effort and sacrifice a little to attain X, whilst another will never attain X, no matter how hard they try, and how much they sacrifice.

Of course meritocracy, karma, and other forms of dogma, all seek to mystify this situation. Some dogmas define it as non-existent as we are all conceived equal. Other dogmas define it as meritocratic, as earned, deserved, and legitimate. Some dogmas define it as necessary. The enlightened person will recognize that social and economic equality are not just a function of the social system, but that the system itself is also reflexive of, and opportunistically exploits, all inherited inequalities, be they genetic, social, economic, cultural, historical, or politico-geographical.

The referent for the holistic, enlightened interrogator must always be the interests of the individual, and every individual. Of course in an imperfect world we do this by approximation. We seek to do the greatest possible good for the greatest possible number of people. However we must always have the interests of concrete individuals as a priority, and never sacrifice any concrete individual's interests in the name of some 'common' good. It is a treacherous landscape we need to traverse, when calculating the optimal basket of 'goods' and 'bads'. We must be sure to be among 'Those who walk away from Omelas'.(Ursula Leguin).

We must be careful to continually re-iterate between the least among us and the luckiest. The holistically enlightened leader will sacrifice some benefits at the top end, to ensure minimum standards at the bottom end. In fact the performance of the system at the bottom end must be one of the most important evaluation criteria. It is more important that everyone has enough, then that a few have luxuries. Hard work and sacrifice must be rewarded more than luck. And here comes the point. Every individual's inheritance has historically been a matter of pure luck.

The holistically enlightened leader will guide their society with a holistically enlightened vision in which inheritance ceases to be a matter of pure luck. The holistically enlightened society will actively seek to improve the luck of each of its members. It will not allow inequality to be reproduced merely to provide a convenient supply of exploitable labor to do the nasty work. It will re-engineer society so that costs and benefits are evenly and fairly

distributed, so that each individual is the measure of the society's performance, and so that each individual has the potential to produce real value with, to take advantage of, the universal, inclusive opportunities that will be available.

Only then will everyone get what they deserve, and deserve what they get. Everyone will then have the greatest motivation to produce the greatest real value they can. The holistically enlightened leader will thus offer each not-yet-conceived individual a positive holistic inheritance. This will require the regulation of human reproduction.

Determinants of happiness and sadness

Scientists have compelling evidence that our potential for happiness is determined from the very beginning. They found it to reside in the left hand side of the brain, which is more or less developed at birth. This predisposes people to being more or less happy. While scientists have yet to identify the actual genes that might produce, or be expressed as, manic depression, they have identified 'marker genes' that are present in sufferers of manic depression, genes that are co-present with the expression of manic depression.

What raises many questions about the nature of manic depression, however, is the fact that only around 60% of people who carry the marker genes will ever develop manic depression. This seems to challenge the notion that manic depression is a genetic illness, rather than a social one. The medical industry wants us to define manic depression as a personal rather than a social problem. In this way they can market their questionable, and unscientific 'treatments' for the symptoms of manic depression.

The notion of 'disease' and 'treatment' is always reflexive! The social or environmental conditions which produce misery and hopelessness are easy enough to identify. See 'Convergences' for details. The climber feels most at peace performing a nominally pointless act. The 'achievement' is purely nominal. They gain nothing by having reached the summit. Like in life generally, the goal is often merely to 'reach the top'.

What motivates and brings such a great sense satisfaction and achievement and peace of mind is the simple act of having a goal right in front of you that you feel confident of being able to achieve. Focusing on a goal settles the mind like meditation. Acts requiring full concentration like motorcycling or rock-climbing lead to 'the actor becoming the act'. The rider becomes one with their machine, and with the road. The climber becomes one with the mountain.

Altruism

With regard to popular discussions concerning 'altruism' and evolution, we must note first that seeking to explain altruism assumes that altruism exists, which isn't a necessary or compelling assumption to make. Evolutionary theorist's 'problems' about 'altruism' evaporate upon closer consideration. It is like the problem of explaining why invisible pink elephants are pink. The 'problem' of the altruistic phenotype being taken advantage of by more opportunistic types and becoming extinct also becomes a pseudo-problem.

Further, if we define altruistic behavior as that which benefits the group and not the individual, then we have a real problem. The 'group' is merely an artifact. It doesn't exist as such. It is only the individuals in the construct 'group' that exist.

However the question might still be validly raised as to why we sometimes help others, even 'strangers' from whom we cannot ever expect any reciprocal behavior, no reward. Such behavior, as an instinct, predisposition, or sentiment, will be reproduced (assuming all instincts emerge randomly, and only persist if they are reproduced) either in spite of being maladaptive (many traits are reproduced as part of a greater whole that as a whole is adaptive, in spite of some of its parts incurring costs rather than bestowing benefits on the organism or other system), or because they do improve the survival and reproduction chances of the organism/system.

Helping others may not directly and immediately benefit the organism or system, but it may indirectly promote the organism or system's survival. It may bestow positive externalities on its environment, which includes other organisms it interacts with. The survival of these species may produce positive reciprocal externalities for our referent organism or 'species'.

The person I help survive might be the next meal of the predator that otherwise would have eaten me. The person I help may go on to invent the wheel or discover fire, and benefit my community or species. Most of the value we as individuals consume is produced socially, and therefore any behavior that encourages goodwill, or facilitates any positive social interaction and social production will ultimately promote the interests of the species.

The more members of a group there are that are prone to helping each other, the more successful the group will be, and the more security and resources they will be able to provide each member. Communities are more successful than mere unintegrated, independent, atomized individuals.

There is no need to assume any 'altruism' on the part of social actors. It is an example of Hume's 'is-ought'. People would like to think that humans are altruistic, especially that they themselves are altruistic, as a form of 'moral-masturbation' consistent with their desire to have been 'created in gods image' for some 'heavenly destiny' and so on. However there is no compelling argument to validate the existence of altruism. Everything that happens in the world can be explained without inventing it as a motivating force in human behavior. As such the concept altruism is redundant.

In fact it simply obfuscates and mystifies things rather than providing any value in terms of understanding or transparency. There is no need to assume altruism, or any evidence of its existence. People do what feels good. If helping others makes them feel good, or superior, or secure, or gets them acceptance and approval, then they are motivated by some variety of self-interest, and therefore their motivation is not altruistic.

Altruism would be 'moral' intention, if it existed, which it doesn't. The closest approximation we can produce, in terms of outcomes, is holistically enlightened self-interest. It can approximate the outcomes altruism and moral intention would produce, if they existed. In fact most examples people might present as 'altruism' would be of the holistically enlightened self-interest variety, whether the actors themselves were 'self-aware' of this fact or not.

The ideal situation is one of mutually synergistic relationships, in which reciprocity isn't even a motivation, but merely an interactively determined product or outcome, the motives of which were pure self-interest. In fact

this is ultimately the definition of all that is positive at all in human interactions. Just try and provide an exception. If you are willing and capable of being honest with yourself, then you will see what I mean.

People are more likely to help people they can anticipate reciprocation from. In this sense we never do anything without the anticipation of some personal benefit. This expectation is often implicit and taken for granted. Therefore we can imagine we are altruistic. However take away any anticipation of reciprocation or benefit, and see how generous people are. The fact is we spend more on Coca-Cola each year than on charity.

Hume's moral sentiment

Morality is holy in the sense that it considers the interests of 'wholes'. It takes as its referent the interests of all sentient beings. Hume's 'moral sentiment' is a calm, cool, detached recognition of the necessity of placing certain limits on all individuals. These limits are determined on a general, indifferent level, detached from the particular motives, desires, or passions of any particular individual. This moral sentiment reflects a recognition of the value of recognizing general rules of conduct in facilitating productive, peaceful, long-term interactions.

They represent the comprehension that our individual self-interests are ultimately served best by respecting the concept of 'public' interest, even though no public exists. When we refer to the 'greater' good, we are merely referring to our shared, mutual, individually held interests. These general interests everywhere contradict immediate short-term interests and desires, however they promote our longer term interests. Thus the referent is still the self.

What we have is enlightened self-interest. This requires no illusions of noble savages, goodwill, or altruism. These limits are accepted based on a sober reflection on the need to place limits on individual rights to facilitate more enduring satisfactions. Thus 'morality' is not an end in itself. Humans have no innate 'love of justice'. It merely represents a compromise, the accommodation of reality.

Morality has no intrinsic value for us. We loathe any limits which frustrate the immediate satisfaction of our instinctive impulses, our desires, our 'will'. Our valuation of morality is instrumental rather than affective. Any 'justice' that is served is merely coincidental. We are not concerned with justice per se. We simply accept it as the best way to protect our property rights, inheritance rights, and to facilitate commerce. Interestingly

Hume makes no mention of slavery in connection with justice. He merely notes that the owner of the slave legally owns the value that the slave produces. I am of course disappointed by Hume in this respect. At least he doesn't argue, like Thomas Aquinas, that it is better to rape a girl than to masturbate. Read more in 'Convergences'.

Social 'gravity' and institutions

Perhaps gravity is a catalyst for all further interactions. It produces 'accumulation'. Primal properties are attracted to each other, and the energy produces fusions, according to latent algorithms of addition. The term 'latent' seems like retrospective ascription, so perhaps it is valid and simpler to refer to latent algorithms as simply algorithms.

Fusion is combination or addition. The fusions produce propergents. The propergents fuse to form further propergents. A whole 'elemental table' is ultimately produced. These elements have properties which interact, explosively. Space and time are produced. The energy drives the universe outward, expanding, until the energy is 'consumed' and the universe reaches a point at which it begins contracting, due to the fundamental algorithm of gravity.

The social is a propergent of the physical, and as such it is merely a level of composition removed. The cultural is a propergent of the physical also. We 'institutionalize' our inherited desires and instincts at a few levels of composition removed. The genetic produces the physical and emotional. The emotional produces the individual. The interaction of individuals thus produced, produce the institutional. This institutionalization of the genetic, physical, emotional, and individual-interact-ional is what we refer to as 'culture'.

Human society is built upon an innate desire for company, for society. Like many other animals, we are social animals. We have affective needs for the company of other humans, to feel at ease. We need our own 'space', but no person is ever happy when left alone for a long time. Loneliness can be one of the most distressing experiences for a person. Company has an intrinsic value, an 'affective' value, independent of any 'instrumental' value. We will even 'put up with' or tolerate many things we 'hate' about each other, in order to keep each other's company.

Of course the collective also provides so many instrumental advantages that even the most misanthropic of people will endure 'company' even if they loathe and detest it. Company provides security from predators. As soon as one individual within a group senses a threat, their reaction will alarm and warn all the others. In any case, the more prey there is for the predator to choose from, the less likely it is that it is you that gets eaten. Society allows for the 'division of labor', specialization, with all its benefits. See 'Convergences' for details.

This is the 'social' gravity which brings people together into interactions. In these interactions algorithms interact, with the emergence of institutionalized relations and the formal institutions they represent. Banks and financial institutions emerge from the institutionalized exchange of goods and services. Institutions are sets of relationships and conditions which become formalized as legal and cultural codes and norms.

Institutions are artifacts which emerge concurrently out of, and contemporaneously with, the relationships that they formally represent. Institutions emerge and evolve over time as their reflexive and underlying relationships develop. The institutions we inherited emerged out of past interactions. To survive they must be either consistent, convergent, with the contemporary sets of relationships, to accommodate the status quo, or have some other sustaining 'power'.

Institutions often become teleological, and internally self-serving. Those working in such institutions maintain the institution in their own interests, rather than to serve some external purpose. They can maintain the institution as long as they can secure external resources. This means convincing people outside of the organization that the institution is producing value for them. This requires good Public Relations. PR is the business of mystification. It produces 'public opinion' which can be used to 'construct' 'mis-informed consent'. Institutions represent themselves as 'necessary' and 'valuable', even if most people have no real idea what they actually do.

If you ask someone, they will act as if they are convinced that the institution is important, and may be able to vocalize some platitudes or slogans, or refer to 'tradition'. However, upon interrogation it will be revealed that they have little idea what it is that they are 'supporting' or 'legitimizing'. They just 'know' that the institution is

important, or at least 'it must be important, and they will simply put their trust in the people who know better, the 'specialists'.

Institutions often appear to exist to serve a function. This is a fallacy of composition. It arises as we enter the environment of institutions, such as the church, police, finance industry, and education, long after they have already been established and institutionalized. We must keep in mind that they are merely the propergerents and artifacts of interactions. They are institutionalized sets of reflexive definitions, relationships, and interactions. They emerged gradually as interactions and relationships developed, and became institutionalized. Institutions are the institutionalization, the formalization, of reflexive definitions, interactions and relationships. Human interactions and relationships have become variously formalized as the institutions of the family, the church, the military, and the legal system.

Up until recently nationalism, sexism, racism, anthropocentrism, hetero-sexualism, and theism were all thoroughly and formally institutionalized. They were sanctioned by 'the State'. Today equal opportunity is becoming more and more institutionalized, and negative discrimination based on sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and religious affiliation has been actively opposed by 'the State'. Measures have been 'institutionalized' to protect people from the same behaviors that 'the State' and its institutions once actively promoted.

Unproductive institutions ultimately become extinct. Sooner or later people see through the PR of institutions and stop providing them with resources. New 'species' of institutions emerge to reflect new sets of relationships. This represents the evolution of the institution as a species. Older institutions spawn new institutions.

The process is usually incremental. The process of evolution requires that any new 'adaption' be consistent with the existing 'status quo', the existing properties of the organism. Revolutions usually fail. New social orders that are imposed upon an unwilling majority tend to last only as long as the minority can employ violence, terror, and force to maintain their power. However they cannot motivate the production of value. Sooner or later the system will not produce enough value to maintain itself. The system will be deprived of resources, including the resources required to prosecute state terror.

An institution must ultimately serve at least 'perceived' interests. It must produce either affective or instrumental value for those who provide it with resources. The institution must 'pander' to some extent to the 'old ways', the 'inherited' dogmas and rituals of its members and sponsors. New religions must incorporate pagan rituals and superstitions. New political orders must pay at least lip service to the inherited slogans and ideologies of the old ones.

The only constant is the perceived self-interest of the actors. Any institution must appeal to enough people's self-interest, or at least the most powerful and influential people's self-interest, to survive. The most powerful vested interest groups have the power to make enough of 'the majority' believe that their interests are equally well served by the same means, to swing a 'majority vote'. They will construct public opinion. What is good for the privileged goose will be perceived as good, or at least necessary, by the majority of the 'gander'.

Mendacity and the economy of lies

Honesty is often defined or 'perceived' as a liability to securing personal and group interests. A fundamental tool of political activity is mendacity, lying. Lies can provide a competitive advantage over the honest competition. This means that honesty can carry a cost. This cost may compel the individuals and groups who might otherwise have dealt honestly to level the playing field by participating in the economy of lies.

Deception, or mendacity, has been, evolutionarily speaking, fundamental to the survival of all living things, both to avoid being preyed on, and as a hunting strategy. It also plays an important part in re-production. The person who can 'seduce' a partner can mate with them, that is, reproduce. They can 'overcome objections'.

Linguists often refer to 'displacement', when referring to the ability to talk about things that are not present, such as the description of an event that happened, of a place the talker has been to or heard about, or of communicating ideas that are abstract. The skill of 'displacement' is an element of the skill of displacing the truth, and thus the skill of deceiving people. If you can convince them to follow you to where you saw a herd of buffalo, you might be able to convince them that the gods have chosen you as their spokesperson, their 'priest'. You would then be a very powerful person indeed, and accrue all sorts of privileges and benefits.

Those who inherited the 'skill' of convincing people, of communicating, inherited a competitive advantage over their competition. They would be more likely to survive and reproduce than their less talented competition. If the 'talented' were in competition for survival with the less talented, they would eliminate them. If there was no competition for survival, the talented would simply come to dominate the less talented. They would have more opportunities for reproduction, more willing sexual partners, and so the population of talented could increase. At times of crisis, of competition for sheer survival, the talented would survive and the less talented would die out. Remember survival is about being just a bit faster, smarter, stronger, and adapted than your competition.

The capacity to 'displace' relies on our ability to 'imagine'. It is this imagination that has produced so much we cherish, so much art, literature, music, and architecture. Fantasy is a wonderful thing. Of course it can be abused like any other resource, to merely serve narrow vested interests, at the expense of everyone and everything else. Our capacity for lying has become, at a later stage of our evolution, our greatest liability. Due to

'advances' in military technology, and our capacity to impact on the global environment, we could eliminate ourselves as players on the evolutionary stage.

Our optimisation of the human condition is dependent on our capacity for socially and personally defining things, and relationships, as they in fact are. We must reveal the truths about TROONATNOOR, and behave in ways consistent with them.

It is common practice to seek to reconcile what we want to be true, what it is convenient, satisfying, rewarding, or profitable for us to be true, but which is not true; with what is true, demonstrable, and compelling.

The term reconcile refers to attempts to subtly and generally modify or negotiate meanings and definitions in a ways that nominally appear to justify or legitimate the incorporation of not-compelling beliefs into holistic world views which are compelling. If we used a jigsaw analogy, we might say that to reconcile something with something else is like cutting off bits of some pieces to force them into the available spaces.

Many people want the benefits and 'rationality' of science and compelling argument in general, but concurrently seek to keep particular beliefs which are not scientific nor compelling, but which are affectively or instrumentally rewarding, and thus provide benefits. They try to subtly change the recipes for what is compelling or at least forgivable in an argument, in order to have their cake, and eat it too. Such an approach does not in general deny the qualitative superiority of scientific method and critical reasoning, but does seek to 'validate' or 'legitimate' a diverse range of non-scientific protocols and criteria for evaluating arguments.

Some people seek to maintain the reproduction of 'down-syndrome' humans in the name of 'neuro-lingual diversity'. Those who wish to reconcile their secondary realities with a compelling primary reality seek to have 'reality-diversity' validated and legitimated. This is known as 'populism' and 'relativism'.

Theists attempt both to reconcile irreconcilable differences and to reform epistemology concurrently. They are engaged in an insidious and ubiquitous conspiracy to mystify, obstrucify, and corrupt reason. They seek to re-establish ideas dismissed thousands of years ago by ancient Greek philosophers as superstition. One of the allegations made against Socrates in his trial was that he questioned the reality of the Greek gods.

It is not uncommon for high-flying physicists to talk about god and physics in the same breath. These people have a reputation as good hard scientists. They use this reputation to promote their superstitious beliefs. They attempt to use the credibility of the well-known scientist, in a sort of confidence or authority 'transfer', to promote dogma, to validate and legitimate it. We must carefully evaluate the competency of such people as philosophers. Hawkins may be a great physicist, but that is no necessary reflection on his philosophical expertise. Even great scientists find themselves addicted to the comforts of superstition.

We should also be wary of confusing technical expertise with social engineering expertise. Being able to make machines work does not qualify one to make societies work. This argument would be supported by those purveyors of the cosmic conspiracy theory regarding UFOs. If I stepped out of a UFO, that might give me some authority or credibility. The high tech UFO might support my claim that I come from a technologically advanced society that has solved all its social problems. With this authority, you might be willing to listen to me, even give me the power to realize my 'home' planet's utopia here on earth.

There are many foundations of authority that work with humans. Some prophets claim to speak for 'God'. They claim their authority through being the messenger of god, either directly (Moses) or through his angel Gabrielle (Mohamed). Some followers of prophets ground their teacher's authority in being the son of god (Paul's claim for Jesus). Some shamans claim mystical power, and the capacity to enter the realm of the dead, to navigate the afterlife. Some cult priests claim to know the will of the gods, and how to appeal to the gods. Some advisors claim to have the power to interpret tea leaves, coffee grounds, tarot cards, animal entrails, dates and numbers, astronomical constellations, and so on. Some claim to comprehend 'economics' or 'markets'. People appeal to us in many ways to put our trust in them. Most humans are not very charismatic or impressive in themselves. They don't have any natural authority. It is traditional to rely on a transferred authority to gain people's trust and confidence.

People are more likely to accept an inconvenient but compelling lesson from the son of God, then from a wise holistic-philosopher or social prophet. People who profess to read tea leaves or astrological constellations are really offering up wisdom and intelligence in a way that is more likely to be better received than simple advice would. People confident of their own 'intuition' often offer their insights in the form of 'clairvoyance' or 'readings'. Water 'diviners' sell their ability to 'read the land' as a 'divining' skill. Psychiatrist's degrees and diplomas, or even better, best-selling books and popular television shows, provide the same sort of authority and positive reception. They can even have the same sort of placebo effect as the healing powers of a holy man or saint. The use of transferred authority is a tradition that continues.

It is for this reason that Moses or his priests told the Israelites that god had spoken to him, passing down the laws, the Ten Commandments. It is for this reason that the gospel writers ascribed various claims to Jesus, including that he himself had claimed to be the son of god, had performed miracles, had even died on the cross, come back to life, and then ascended to heaven. The same claims were made by the priests of the Mithraic religion about their 'sun' god Mithras. The Cult of Jesus was in competition with the more established Mithraic cult at the time of the writing of the gospels.

Buddha was made into a sort of god by his followers to suit their purposes and interests, even though he explicitly stated that he was a mere mortal, and was careful to avoid becoming deified in his lifetime. Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormons, claimed to have been given the power to interpret 'new' testaments, and 'god's will', from some golden plates he had found. L Ron Hubbard made some fantastical science-fiction-like claims promising his

followers personal super powers. Most religious 'leaders' seek to generate a transfer of authority from 'god'. The simplest way to seek an authority which will appeal to people to listen to your message is to claim that you are merely the messenger for 'god'. God is the ultimate authority. To speak for god is to speak with the ultimate authority. In this case being ordinary and non-threatening is a bonus. The more humble the better. People respond to humility better than to the perceived 'arrogance' of the prophet or philosopher. Who but an arrogant person would dare challenge others and to prescribe and proscribe what they should and shouldn't do?

I am 'The Philosopher-Prophet of the Eden Protocols'. I agonized over the pros and cons of claiming such an authority for myself. History is full of social prophets and philosophers, or their followers, adopting such a strategy. As a result we have inherited a world full of religions and dogma. Most dogma attempts to motivate people to do the right thing, through the promise of heaven, and the threat of hell. It is the deliberate strategy of employing lies as the means towards positive ends. The strategists feel that the ends justify the means. The problem is that the means, the lies, the dogma, can just as easily be employed for undesirable ends. Once you have validated the legitimacy of lying, you can't expect lies to only be employed towards good, ethical, desirable, idealistic ends. It is like developing a weapon, and assuming that only the 'good guys' will use it.

Jesus and Mohamed would be appalled to find what has been done in their name. Claims and statements have been ascribed to them, to serve ends they would not have condoned. It is ultimately the followers who write the history, and construct the religion. Once you give them the authority of god, they have a blank cheque to impose their own narrow superstitions, dogmas, beliefs, and narrow vested (unenlightened) self-interests upon the followers of the teacher-prophet-philosopher. The religion becomes an institution serving interests not related to the original message of the 'teacher'.

Once you grant some people the authority of god, you have opened a Pandora's Box. I don't have any more power than Jesus to ensure that my words are not one day used to serve ends I did not intend. It is not an easy decision. I am certain that my words would gain a wider and more attentive audience if I claimed the transferred authority of god, if I claimed that god or his representative had spoken the words to me. In that case I would be the humble spokesperson for god.

Instead I must take the road less traveled, the harder road. I must arrogantly contend that my arguments are compelling. I will have to rely on the compellingness of my arguments to speak for themselves. The only authority I have will be that which my own arguments have. I will have to let my arguments speak for themselves. I am not certain that I have made the best decision. However it is, in principle, the only one I could make.

My Protocols are about principled decision making. The process is as important as the objectives. It is about the means as much as the ends. If you violate a principle, claiming your particular case is an exception, then you shouldn't be surprised to find everyone else doing the same thing. You have to behave in principle, otherwise you validate unprincipled behavior in general. The costs of violating a principle, and invalidating it, far outweigh any benefits. You have to think and act holistically, and principledly. You have to act as if every action were to be held up as a universal role model for everyone else's actions, as Immanuel Kant more or less put it. You either act on principle, or you act un-principledly. You can't be almost principled any more than you can be almost a virgin.

The secular form of 'transferred authority' is to make claims about some 'historical imperative'. Lenin-Marxism's Bolshevism and Adolf Hitler's Nazism both claimed a historical imperative. Communism, and Nazism were, respectively, prophesied as the natural consequence of the implacable progress of history. Marx appealed to a dialectic. Hitler appealed to more mystical notions. They claimed their authority as the readers of historical determinisms. Their interpretations of history were the basis of their authority as social prophets, as visionary leaders.

They sought their authority in compelling arguments. Hitler added a perfectly adapted appeal to the unenlightened self-interests of the general population, and precisely targeted appeals to narrow vested interest groups, such as the military, big business, and the churches. Hitler harnessed the pure opportunism of his society to his own ends. He glorified that opportunism in the name of historical imperatives to fight Bolshevism, race

'corruption', and in the name of National Socialism. Some will claim that Hitler's own ends were themselves purely opportunistic, defined by a lust for power and wealth.

Hitler appealed to all that was base, mean, selfish, egoistic, self-glorifying, and self-justifying in people. That was his genius. It is easy to gain power if you tell people what they want to hear, and appeal to the lowest common denominator, whilst appealing to the narrow vested interests of the most powerful and privileged. Tell people that they are the chosen people, with the right to exploit, enslave, and rape everyone else, and they will love you. Remind you of anyone else? Or haven't you read the Bible? Moses is still defined as a hero, a 'moral' leader. Had Hitler won the war, it is reasonable to say that history would hold him in at least equal esteem. However the tables would have been turned.

We live under a Judeo-Christian hegemony in which Moses is a hero and Hitler is a monstrous criminal. These definitions are necessarily reflexive of Biblical truth, and the fact that whoever wins the war gets to define who the patriots and who the terrorists were. Had Hitler won, the bible would be defined as Zionist propaganda, and Moses would be defined as the genocidal, rapacious, maniacally deluded terrorist who gave fascism a bad name. We will consider the details of the genocide committed by Moses and Joshua later in our discussions. I was as much surprised by their story as any of you will be.

It would be truly unrealistic to assume that I could control any Pandora's Box that I open. I abhor opportunism as the fundamental source of the inequalities, injustice, exploitation, lies and dogma that I seek to eliminate.

I will, however, 'prophecise' the conditions under which particular elements of my Protocols can be expected to become attractive to, and therefore popularized by, the beneficiaries of the dominant, hegemonic culture. I do not anticipate that much pressure for the adoption of my Protocols will come from 'below'. However once the beneficiaries of the dominant hegemonic culture 'sell' it to them, they will act as if it was their idea all along. They will consume the public opinion constructed for them. They will insist on the adoption of something like my Protocols.

The only authority I will appeal to for my arguments is the compellingness of the arguments themselves. I haven't stepped out of a spacecraft. I don't recall ever having spoken to any god or angel. My arguments won't appeal to your ego or your desire to exploit, steal, rape, or enslave others. I am not even particularly charismatic, holy looking, or articulate. I have no more authority to speak to you or to demand your attention than is implicit the arguments I have presented here. Thus listen to these arguments. Do not evaluate them based on anything about their author.

The only authority I can command is in the competence I demonstrate in de-constructing specious arguments, and constructing compelling ones. I wish, in the interests of all who stand to benefit from my arguments, that I could appeal to some other authority. However I can't. I hope that anyone who continues my work in the future also does not allow themselves to be seduced by the apparent efficacy of transferred authority. I hope that they, too, avoid opening Pandora's Box, and avoid unleashing the lowest common denominator in humanity. There shall be no ism in my name. My appeal is to holistic, enlightened self-interest, to holistically enlightened reason, motivated by a holistic, enlightened awareness that produces a motivation approximating that of a 'moral' intention. I want us all to be free from dogma. Buddha made the same appeal.

The truth may hurt. However isn't pain a form of feedback that teaches us when we are behaving in ways detrimental to our survival and happiness?

I have often heard that no good deed goes unpunished. I hope one day we will have no need to fear being victimized for trying to do the right thing, for speaking what we believe to be the truth, for living with open minds, ears, eyes, and mouths. Please make an effort. You will have to make an effort. I fear that my talents are not up to my task. You will have to make up for my shortcomings.

One-step enlightenment

Animate things are animated by motives, by desires. We inherit desires directly via our genes, and indirectly via conditioning. These desires are the puppet-strings. We are their puppets. As long as you live your will is determined by them. What you experience as 'free-will' is merely the freedom to act upon these desires, these motives, what you experience as your 'will'. Schopenhauer put it best when he said while we may at times be free to act on our motives and desires, we are never free to choose them. You may rationalize your behavior after the event, but all behavior is emotionally motivated. All behavior has the attempted satisfaction of some desire as its motive. If you can find any behavior without motive you will have found free will. That is the definition of free will. That is what free will would be, if it existed.

You feel you have made a decision, but decisions are merely the product of a process of 'reckoning' the costs and benefits of competing baskets of desires. What you feel to be your 'choice' is merely the dominant motive or desire among competing motives or desires. Reason is the desire to enjoy enduring satisfaction of desires. It is not the opposite of emotion. It is, as Hume puts it, 'the quieter emotion'.

Take all of your motives and desires and mentally place them at a distance.

They are the self. The absence of the self, the sum total of our desires, is 'nirvana'. Without them you have no motive, no desire, no self, no dis-satisfaction or suffering. You also have no access to pleasure. For most people the costs of life far outweigh the benefits. For most people the only way to affirm life is to positively focus on the glass being 5% full. Plato's Socrates and Lao Tzu's 'Dao Te Ching', and Buddha, were among the first to define death as the philosopher's ultimate goal. Only when we are free from the limits of our perception can we hope to see the ultimate reality. Chasing after satisfaction always leads to dis-satisfaction.

'Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player, that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. 'Macbeth (Act 5, Scene 5) William Shakespeare (1564 –1616).

Buddha, Socrates, Schopenhauer, and many of the philosophers we respect today, found no compelling arguments for affirming life. And those others who never chimed in, born to lives of at least relative privilege and satisfaction, paid for by the sweat, toil, suffering and exploitation of others, had every motivation to avoid the issue entirely. For them the glass was always more than half full. Read more in 'Convergences'.

My Protocols seek to produce a world and lives worthy of being affirmed by everyone. Remember the world we have inherited is the product of interactions, and only persists as long as it is constantly re-produced. This defines our response-ability.

Blank-slates, karma, and meritocracy: blaming the victims

If we are all conceived 'blank slates' with equal potentials, in a meritocratic society where rewards are proportionate to effort, sacrifice, and risk-taking, then inequality is legitimate. If you get what you deserve then life is fair.

Once you recognize that we are conceived with unequal holistic inheritances, that intelligence, health, beauty, talent, socio-economic status, and access to education and other opportunities are not equally distributed, you need an alternative myth if you are going to legitimate inequality.

Karma is this myth. Karma defines our unequal holistic inheritances as deserved, having been earned through our behavior in past lives. This adds insult to injury, defining the unlucky as 'morally' inferior to the lucky. The lucky need feel no compulsion to help the unlucky, to re-distribute their windfalls, as the unlucky deserve their bad fortune.

Blank slates, meritocracy, and karma all assume free-will. We can only deserve to be rewarded or punished if we have free-will. If our behavior is determined, then it would be unfair to punish or reward us for behaviors that are out of our control.

The keystone to enlightenment is a recognition of the deterministic nature of TROONATNOOR. No system of social relations with the fallacious assumption of freewill as its basis will ever produce holistic justice. The concept, the myth, of free-will, is perpetuated most strongly by the lucky few who use their favorable holistic inheritances to accumulate power, privilege, and benefits for themselves, to exploit and re-produce inequality as means to their own ends, the satisfaction of their own desires.

Remember that inequality is produced by the universe, but only persists if it is reproduced. This is our level of response-ability in an interactively-deterministic universe. If you are among the lucky it is satisfying and convenient to define your luck as deserved. However our nature and our nurture are inherited. No-one deserves their inheritance. We can only rightly deserve what we have earned, through effort, sacrifice, and risk-taking.

Outcomes are the product of effort-sacrifice-risk multiplied by the luck of holistic inheritance. Luck leverages effort-sacrifice-risk.

The more favorable our holistic inheritances, the more likely it is that we will believe that we can attain our desired ends if we invest effort-sacrifice-risk. That is why we often observe a higher level of motivation in people who have inherited opportunities, talents, beauty, intelligence, wealth, social connections and education. The realistic confidence that we can succeed is motivating. Success is facilitated or prevented by our holistic inheritance, and this indirectly determines our level of motivation. Blaming someone for being unmotivated is as absurd as blaming them for any other part of their holistic inheritance.

The more realistic our chances of success are, the more our effort-sacrifice-risk taking is leveraged by our holistic inheritances, the more motivated we are to try, and keep trying when we face setbacks. The more able are more motivated to invest effort-sacrifice-risk than the less able as they feel more confident of being rewarded for their effort-sacrifice-risk.

Those who use Napoleon or Adolf Hitler as counter-arguments forget the inherited personality and, more importantly, historical situation their 'successes' were favored by. The rare cases of 'rags-to-riches' successes are used as propaganda by the lucky, to deny the reality that we tend to stay in the socio-economic-status group we were conceived to, no matter how hard we try. It is a myth the unlucky want to be true, and hence it is eagerly consumed by the masses. It motivates those with poor inheritances to work hard, even though the main beneficiaries of their effort are the beneficiary classes. They do this with the unrealistic hopes of joining that privileged minority.

As the unlucky are no more noble and no less opportunistic in their motivations than the lucky, there is no reason to expect any changes in society when they come to power. Human nature is opportunistic. It did not change

when we moved from aristocracy to democracy any more than it did when we went from capitalism to socialism. There was merely less for the privileged to appropriate under socialism, as people were not motivated to invest effort-sacrifice-risk taking, and the production of consumer goods was given a low priority vis a vis military related goods and services by the central planners, who got all their 'luxury' goods direct from the Capitalist west.

It is a fallacy to assume the victim is any better than the perpetrator. The weak, untalented, unattractive, and not-so-intelligent may want to eliminate some inequality, but not out of a love of justice. They are motivated by resentment. They do not want others to have what they feel they themselves are ever likely to attain. If you asked people to set a level for a wealth tax, they would set it just a bit higher than their own level of wealth. Tax those richer than themselves. They will not, however, want to share what they have with those less fortunate than themselves.

Socialism is merely another form of opportunism. Those without the current forms of capital want to pretend we are all equal. Like Freud's siblings, they recognize they themselves do not have the qualities by which privileges and power are naturally accumulated, and so giving up on the hope of having more than others, they content themselves with ensuring no-one else shall have more than them. If they themselves don't have the qualities to be better than others, they will make sure all are 'equal'. This is their best opportunistic strategy given their poor holistic inheritances.

And as experience in the U.S.S.R shows, under socialism party power is exploited as opportunistically under socialism as other forms of capital are opportunistically exploited under capitalism. Those with power use it to accumulate privileges and goods for themselves, whatever the form that power takes. Search in vain for your 'noble savage'. Doubt the motivations of your 'socialist'. The first thing they do when they get in power is destroy anything of real beauty, talent, truth, or nobility. They vent their self-loathing on anything that reminds them of their own weakness, lack of talent, lack of beauty, and lack of nobility.

Further, as most people want to reproduce themselves, and not feel guilty for the poor inheritances they will force upon their offspring, they delude themselves, imagining their children can have it all if they work hard. This allows them to blame their children if they do not live up to the myth of the potential their parents imagine for them.

The crux of the myths of karma, meritocracy, and the blank-slate is the blaming of the victim, and the reflexive masturbatory self-congratulation of the lucky.

The unlucky are motivated to continue striving for a mostly impossible quality of life while actually producing all the products that make the lives of the lucky so comfortable and rewarding.

Of course they do receive benefits for their efforts in terms of higher living standards. The fact that the lucky privileged can appropriate most of the value produced does not mean the exploited are not rewarded at all for their efforts.

Under Socialism the self-interest motive is mostly eliminated. Capitalism, with its myths, does motivate people to effort-sacrifice-risk, and does produce better outcomes than Socialism ever could. Socialism is not compatible with human nature. The real question is whether we could allow those who ultimately produce most of the value to consume a fairer share of it than they currently do.

Evolution, functionalist teleology, and intelligent design

Energy can neither be created or destroyed. It always has existed and always will, transforming in interactions through different states including heat, light, and matter. The most basic forms of matter combine to produce more complex ones. The table of elements shows this 'evolution'. This process is spontaneous and continuous. Everything is in a process of change.

Gods would have to be the product of already existing things. They would merely be one level higher in the chain of being, rather than the 'creators' of being. Positing their existence is superfluous to our understanding of anything.

No-one can claim to understand the nature of awareness. Today in laboratories living organisms are produced by combining what we conventionally define as inanimate molecules. This convention seems to be very problematic. It seems more compelling and in the spirit of Ockham's razor to see all matter-energy as having the potential for awareness. What this potential for awareness actually becomes aware of is merely determined by the form it takes. Otherwise we are left with the notion that somehow something that is not aware, can be combined to produce something that is.

Thus I now say that the potential for awareness cannot be created or destroyed. All that can change is its quality. All that changes is what it is aware of. Perhaps it can approach un-consciousness at its lowest levels. Mineral consciousness might approximate this. At its highest levels it would approach an awareness of everything in the universe. In reality, due to the nature of the 'game' or experience engine we call 'life', it lies somewhere in between. Energy is a concept referring to the potential to do work. Awareness in the same way is the potential to be aware.

Humans have tended to define other animal's behaviors as instinctive compulsions. If you can recognize the deliberate, motivated, object-oriented motivations of animals, then perhaps you might also imagine that electrons experience their own motivations, rather than being merely compelled by electro-magnetic fields. Reflexively, you might be able to accept that you yourself are a mere puppet to your motivations, the equivalent of an electron being attracted and repelled.

Aristotle made the typical mistake of philosophers. He failed to continue his deconstruction of arguments into their most basic assumptions. These are usually implicit rather than explicit. He stopped too soon. He asserted that the 'first cause' is man's will, his motivation. He just assumed this. He never interrogated this assumption. He never asked where these motivations come from. Of course Schopenhauer recognized that it is the will itself that is the master of the human animal. As such, in Aristotle's terms, it is will that is prime cause, and not 'man'.

Aristotle's teleology is his most fundamental error. Combined with an anthropocentric mindset which places humans at the center of the universe, this teleology, where things exist to serve functions, propelled the evolution of the gods into the one God. If properties and things exist to serve functions, then something must have had that intention in mind when it designed them. The logical conclusion of such faulty reasoning is the existence of a God with intentions and designs. This God is far removed from the original concept of gods with all the human weaknesses, themselves victims of their desires as much as any human.

Birds do not have wings to fly, they fly because they can. They can adapt the qualities they have inherited to satisfy their desires. Flying proved useful in satisfying these desires, and so birds have opportunistically taken advantages of this ability. Faculties do not evolve to serve functions. They evolve by chance, and accumulate in proceeding organisms as they either increase their host organism's chances of survival and reproduction, or simply do not prevent it. It is incredibly frustrating to hear documentary narrators tell me how polar bears evolved their white fur as an adaptation, in order to be less visible to prey and predators. Evolution did not give our ancestors the power

to walk on their hindquarters in order to wade through water, gain a better view of their environment, or free their hands to use tools.

When an Attenborough announces this in his television documentary he is reinforcing the same faulty, millennia old teleology of Aristotle. To be more precise, and avoid this functionalist fallacy, we should say that our ancestors found at some point they could walk upright, and this they found useful, so they continued it. It conferred advantages upon them that allowed them to survive and reproduce. Of course other animals without this advantage also survived. And many of the qualities humans inherited conferred no advantages on them. Many conferred distinct disadvantages. However as a whole, the holistic inheritance proved adequate to survival and reproduction. We survived and reproduced despite much of our genetic inheritance.

The typical documentary misrepresentation of evolution completely misrepresents the passive, hit and miss, random nature of evolution. It is merely one step removed from creationism, implying some design, intention, or plan, only in this case on the part of the process of evolution itself. It merely, intentionally or otherwise, replaces an active, caring, personal, designing, planning 'god', with an evolutionary process with the same characteristics and intentions. Polar bears are adapted because they have white fur. They did not evolve white fur in order to be better adapted. Evolution has no plan, no intention, no design, and no goal. It is a spontaneous and open-ended process.

Random mutations occur. If the organism that is produced survives and reproduces, the mutations are reproduced. Such random mutations occur now and then over millions of generations. They accumulate within the organisms. Scarcity and the resulting competition for resources means that only some organisms survive and reproduce. This is negative selection. The most successful competitors are those whose accumulated mutations bestow a competitive advantage upon them. Complexity and sophistication emerge as mutations accumulate over millions of generations. Evolution naturally moves in the direction of increasing complexity and sophistication without any intention, plan, or motivation. It is a hit and miss process.

Human creativity is also a hit and miss process. You must be willing to take chances, and accept that the price of a few hits is a lot of misses, the price of success is a lot of failure. Ask any creative person, inventor, scientist, musician, writer, or designer. The only difference is that we have motives. We have intentions. Or to be more precise, motives and intentions have us. All our innovations are intended to satisfy an emotional desire. Our desires thus drive us to innovate. Our desires drive our own processes of evolution. We are the product of evolution. Our desires are the product of evolution. Our desires now drive our further interactions with evolution.

We have become active in the process of evolution. However all our actions are derivative of our desires which are the products of evolution. When we become aware of the processes of evolution, what is occurring is evolution coming to know itself. This is the return to Godhead of Eastern spiritualism. We are evolution. We are the question, the answer, and the means of questioning and answering. The knower, the known, and the means of knowing, are all one.

Functionalist teleology produced a planning, designing, all-capable, competent, creating god. Our enlightenment made that god redundant. However the failure of most people to comprehend the true nature of evolution has maintained the original proposition for the existence, for the necessity of, a creating, designing god, merely re-invented as a distorted misrepresentation or misunderstanding of the process of evolution known as 'intelligent design'. When supposedly enlightened people do the work of creationists we must question their integrity, or their competence.

Functionalist teleology produced the logical need for a god, and provided the most fertile ground for that god's evolution. That same logic is now contaminating the pure reason of evolution in an insidious and invidious way. It 'created' god, and now, after god's death, appears to be reviving him by indirect means. It is slipping him in by the back door while everyone is watching the front door. Remember all tricks are performed by distracting our attention from the magician's actions. It is called 'mis-direction'. It is the most powerful tool of the trickster. Today the mass media's main objective is mis-direction. The election game's main objective is mis-direction. The 'producers of history', the New World Order conspirators, main tool is misdirection. Mis-direction and straw men.

The transferred authority of prophets and religious dogma

Plato builds up Socrates as a super-man, to use him as the spokesperson for Plato's arguments. Around the same time the followers of the teachings of Buddha and Mahavira did the same. Marx gave his own ideological wish-list the authority of history when he fabricated the myth of a historical determinism which had Socialism as its 'end'. Moses claimed to speak with his god's authority. Moses and Hitler are identical historical figures, having chosen a people for themselves, for whom they claimed a unique historical destiny. This destiny 'legitimated' their holocausts. Mein Kampf and the Torah are identical documents with the same historical products; mass-scale theft, rape, murder, and genocide.

The New Testament writers build up a mythical Jesus, recycling the then-current gods and the myths associated with them. The 'disciples' had Jesus speak their words, with a god's authority. Mohamed claimed to speak for the angel Gabriel, and hence with a god's authority. John Smith claimed to read from golden plates he had found, which recorded a god's words, and therefore to speak with a god's authority. More ancient shamans claimed a connection with the spirit world, and hence to speak with the authority of their ancestors. The tradition of appealing to tradition in general as an authority is, well, traditional. Alternative forms of authority derive from the reputed abilities of astronomers, oracles, seers, and psychics to read the future in everything from the intestines of animals, to the movements of the stars, to tea-leaves. All such forms of transferred authority rely on their audience's credulity and desire to believe which constitute all forms of superstition.

The intentions of all these prophets may well have been noble. Hence Plato's 'noble lies'. They felt their ends justified their means. There were all would be social engineers with little faith in the general population's capacity to comprehend complex arguments concerning good 'habits' (Greek Ethos=habit), what we call 'ethics'. So these leaders adopted the existing practice of appealing to transferred authority for the conclusions of their arguments, which became the accepted 'dogma', the hegemonic 'articles of faith'.

The general public would conform to these prescriptions and proscriptions, these 'commandments', based on fear and faith, rather than reason. Of course once you institutionalize such practices, there is no way to prevent less 'noble' minds from exploiting them for their own, less noble ends. In any case it is questionable whether individuals have the right to deprive other individuals of informed consent, simply as they assume themselves to be intellectually, even 'morally', superior.

Buddha is perhaps the first to adopt the strategy of compelling argument and to reject 'transferred' authority. For him the argument must be the authority in and of itself. If it is not compelling, then it should not be granted any authority, whether it came from a purported genius, angel, or god. Buddha had faith in the power of human reason to distinguish between compelling and specious arguments. He was perhaps the first true democrat. He rejected the use of 'noble lies'. He presented his own logical arguments as clearly as he could, and left his reader to make up their own mind. Thus he promoted the notion of holistically informed consent. He was humble, in contrast to the arrogance of a Plato or Paul.

Every prophet is bound to feel the seductive lure of 'transferred authority'. In fact the followers of prophets including Mahavira, Buddha, and Jesus, frustrated with the lack of acceptance of their prophet's teachings, and in many cases seduced by the desire for power, built up myths for their prophets. These myths conferred the authority of gods, super-powers, or historical destiny upon their prophets. Naturally this conferred a transferred authority upon themselves, as the present-day representatives of that prophet, that authority. Mohamed imitated them with the same motive.

However be warned. If we teach people to accept the authority of arguments based on the authority of the speaker, or who they claimed to speak for, then the substance of arguments will become less important. Any

charlatan with an ideology or desire for power will be able to appeal to the tradition of transferred authority. Enter Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, Mao, the Catholic Popes, the Taliban, The Shia Muslims with their 'Sharia' law, the Christian fundamentalists with their biblical literalism, and Marxists with their noble lies of noble savages and blank slates. No particular dogma can be defended as being more or less compelling than any other. The only way that a conflict of dogma could be resolved is through 'might is right', that is, war.

The bible justifies, promotes, and prescribes, rape, murder, slavery, genocide, war, and stoning people to death for wearing cotton with wool, or for collecting firewood on Saturday. It tells us that the earth is flat, and that the whole universe rotates around it. It is completely fatuous to refer to such a document as a source of authority for anything. I have made an extensive holistic overview and analyses of the evolution of religion in the companion book to TROONATNOOR, 'Religion

Change yourself and change the world

Anne Frank, in hiding with her family from the Nazi's in a loft in Amsterdam, wrote 'how wonderful it is that no-one has to wait a single moment before beginning to improve the world'. What she was saying is that it all begins with us. We can change how we behave immediately. We can make a better world, by simply being better people.

But I don't think she meant like Michael Jackson 'starting with the man in the mirror' by living lives of wasteful luxury and making millions writing lyrics like 'they don't really care about us'. This is the most sickening thing about filthy rich pop stars like Bono and Sting making even more millions telling us 'we've got to carry each other' and 'love is the seventh wave' while living in castles, accumulating more wealth than they could ever spend in a hundred life-times.

When people sing 'If only I could, I'd make the world a better place' they conveniently imagine that someone else is responsible, and deny their own response-ability. The world is only made up of individuals. The only person you can change is yourself. And until you change, you surely cannot expect anyone else to change. But if individuals do change, they will reflexively change the world. Of course we all imagine we are waiting for everyone else to start.

We tell ourselves that we alone are powerless to change anything, and thus absolve ourselves of any response-ability. However the fact is that we are all opportunists. Until we begin behaving according to the principles I have outlined in TROONATNOOR and my Eden Protocols, we are 'the bad guys'. This is why whenever the media talk of 'innocent' victims, I always ask, innocent of what? For in fact we are all guilty of the opportunistic exploitation and reproduction of inequality.

Contemplation and mind experiments

I've invested a great deal of effort and energy, and devoted lots of time to pure speculative and reflective contemplation. In the process of reading widely I find that I have arrived at the same conclusions as some of the greatest minds in human history. I've surprised myself to find echoes of my own thoughts in the works of so many other thinkers, from the ancient Greeks, to the Hindu and Daoist sages, Buddha and Jesus, through to the European philosophers, and right up to modern scientists and evolutionary socio-psychological-biologists. I have detailed these 'Convergences' in a sort of history of the development of philosophical thought.

The power of 'thought experiments' has been demonstrated not only by the Einstein's of this world, but by the ancient Greeks such as Democritus whose arguments, made over

2500 years ago, could only recently be 'demonstrated' by 'modern' scientific measurement. This attests to the power of pure speculative, reflective, contemplative reason. Together with pure contemplation, the main tools of the philosopher will always be their commitment, ingenuity, patience, curiosity, observation skills, their skills of analysis or de-construction, and their courage, both in challenging their inherited social realities, and themselves. The last is perhaps the greatest challenge, and the true test of a real philosopher. As Mohamed stated, the true 'Jihad' is an internal and personal battle. Prophets and Visionaries

It is sad that most people will not comprehend the vision that I have of a better world. It will be easier for the average person to identify what they have to lose, than to comprehend what they have to gain. The sorts of changes that the holistically enlightened philosopher will be compelled to recommend demand some real sacrifices on at least this generation. The costs of change are more obvious to most people than the benefits.

While the current generation will benefit from many of my 'Protocols', the main beneficiaries will be 'The not-yet-conceived'. The visionary has a clear vision of what could be. The average person merely sees what is, and was. With no recognition of the vision, and the benefits possible, they will tend to focus on what they stand to lose. Getting others to share their vision, to become aware of the current costs, and the potential future benefits, is one of the greatest challenges facing philosophers.

The costs of pursuing truth

Philosophers are rarely considered sympathetic by their peers. The value of a philosopher's work is rarely recognized during their lifetime. This means, of course, that philosophers are rarely rewarded for their efforts. They are usually socially excluded, ridiculed, victimized, persecuted, punished and compelled to repudiate their discoveries. For the most part they are simply ignored by their smug and complacent contemporaries.

Philosophers have been variously defined as witches, heretics, political criminals, traitors, corrupters of youth, dissidents, and mentally ill. Philosophers have been ostracized, ex-communicated, stripped of status, rank, and their basic human rights, denied access to education and government posts, imprisoned, tortured, burnt alive, hung drawn and quartered, poisoned, and damned to eternal torture in hell.

The very nature of the work of the philosopher, the interrogation of reality, and of hegemonic definitions and their reflexive relations of power and privilege, defines them as a threat to their contemporary society's most privileged and powerful. They threaten to undermine the bases of privilege and power of the beneficiary classes.

On a more personal level, interrogations are unwelcome, as they put into question things people would rather not have put into question. People cherish and value certain myths, lies, and general definitions of the nature of things, and of themselves. People value validation, reinforcement, loyalty, and acceptance, in their relationships. People do not wish to be made aware of their own faults, weaknesses, incompetencies, denials and self-deceits. And they certainly don't want others to become aware of them. Thus philosophers represent a 'threat' to almost everyone.

The Philosopher may act out of compassion and goodwill, but they can not anticipate to be rewarded, to gain acceptance, or approval, let alone 'love'. They will not be received with good will, nor treated with compassion. The Philosopher realizes that the truth may hurt at times, but recognizes that the search for the truth represents the only way to seek out a more positive and rewarding life experience for everyone.

Philosophers could employ their talents and intelligence to gain privileges, power, and benefits for themselves. However they tend to prefer their quest for truth over an easy, comfortable life. They are happier living in a barrel, like Diogenes, if it means they can be authentic and true to themselves. As long as Alexander the Great doesn't come along and block their sunshine, they do just fine with their own company. Philosophers aren't that narcissistic, except when it comes to recognition or acclaim. If a dog can do a trick, then it naturally wants an audience to show off to. Aristotle considered pride a virtue, that it was authentic and appropriate to wish to be recognized and valued for what you had accomplished.

Most of all, the Philosopher seeks to know the world as best they can, in order to live in it as best they can. The Philosopher seeks a more positive and rewarding life for themselves, and therefore, necessarily, everything else. The Philosopher, or Scientist, seeks to make this world the best possible world to live in, because they live in it, because their children will live in it, because they are aware that countless billions of sentient beings will either have to endure life, or be able to enjoy life, as a consequence of their action or inaction. The Philosopher is both the product and agent of innovation, the product and agent of evolution. They would be among 'Those that walk away from Omelas'. They seek happiness, but cannot enjoy it knowing it comes at the cost of another's unhappiness. Thus they seek a world defined by synergies.

Only those who give justice deserve to receive justice

When we behave opportunistically, exploiting inherited inequality, we are hypocrites if we complain when others exploit their superiority, Vis a Vis us. If you want to be deserving of justice, then you have to give justice. The least powerful members of our society are animals. Most people give no consideration to their suffering, simply as they have no power to call us to account, to make us pay for our cruelty. We do not need to eat them, their eggs, or their milk. If we do so it because we want to, and because we can. We have motive and opportunity. The more powerful exploit us, because they want to, and they can. They have motive and opportunity.

When we exploit our position of powerful Vis a Vis the less powerful, we are hypocrites to expect those who are more powerful than us, to consider our interests. It is absurd and fatuous for humans to imagine the universe might give a damn about them, when they are the source of systematic, industrial scale suffering for those creatures they enjoy a position of power over.

We all have the same motives. The way in which we differ is in terms of opportunities. If you validate opportunism, you validate the exploitation of all opportunities independent of the costs imposed on some when we exploit these opportunities. A principled approach considers the interests of everything, and seeks synergies. The principled approach sacrifices the right to exploit others, so that this will be reciprocated by those with the power to exploit us.

Responsible reproduction and positive selection of the not-yet-conceived

A female horse will attack another mare with foal, and steal its foal, even though she has no milk for it. Our selfish desire to enjoy the pleasures of parenthood often over-ride our considerations of the interests of the not-yet-conceived. The principle of positive selection is that of applying selection pressures to not-yet-conceived people. It is kinder than the negative selection of evolution. Evolution binges and purges, brainstorms and negatively selects. However today we can anticipate many things before a couple mates and reproduces. We can predict the quality of the inheritance their child would most likely receive. We can judge to a reasonable degree of accuracy whether the child would be receiving a negative or positive inheritance. We can seek to provide for 'genetic justice', along with socio-economic justice, educational justice, and meritocracy. Thus we can actively seek to provide the best holistic inheritance possible for all members of our society.

There is no place for self-deceit or denial in the philosopher's life

You need to be able to experience who and what you are. To do this you need to be honest with yourself. When you experience urges, emotions, desires, it is of utmost importance that you do not deny that you are experiencing them. This is not an appellation to act on every urge you have, but a call to authenticity, a call to stop repressing and censoring our true natures. You must honestly feel and experience every impulse, and not filter out those which you have been told you should not have, which you do not feel comfortable with, or that you feel don't belong to the person you think you are, should be, or wish you were. This is the basis of psycho-analysis, which you can read about in detail in 'Convergences'.

When you feel the urge to be destructive, to hurt, to injure, to impose your will on others, to take advantage of others, to get what you want, to cry, to voice outrage, to argue, to stand up and scream at the injustice you witness; whatever it is you feel: acknowledge the feeling; lust, desire, rage, smug self-satisfaction: feel it thoroughly, give yourself over to it. Be real. And then consider what that feeling reveals about our innate human nature.

Of course do not act out on every impulse, as many of these impulses are destructive and unproductive. What is required is the validation that you have such feelings, such impulses, such desires. The interrogation of such feelings and impulses will reveal much valuable information about you, us, and the world, about the nature of reality, and the reality of our natures. These feelings are a part of reality, a part of us, a part of our inheritance. By recognizing our true selves we have the potential to optimize ourselves. By admitting our faults we can eliminate or manage them. By recognizing reality for what it is, we will be in a position to optimize our experience of life, to live the best possible lives available to us.

You cannot change what you don't acknowledge. That holds true for you personally, as it does for organizations, and society as a whole. We must fight the urge to conveniently deny truths. Remember, 'the problem is, there are no problems'. We won't solve problems unless we first identify them. Sooner or later we pay for our denial. Lies have long legs. Denial that a problem exists will only delay the inevitable, and increase the costs of dealing with it exponentially.

Optimalisation

Optimalisation is not about a utopian vision, it is about a scientifically compelling one. The current dystopia which the majority of sentient beings on this planet experience is not inevitable. These dystopias exist, but they must be reproduced if they are to persist. If we all, as individuals, cease re-producing history, we can begin producing history. We can produce a history that will be a positive inheritance for every not-yet-conceived individual, rather than a burden. We have the potential to virtually eliminate all forms of inherited inequality, and all other forms of violence, including war, poverty, and opportunistic exploitation.

Society and history are the sum-total of our individual actions. The social system cannot be reproduced if we don't reproduce it. This means that we have the power to transform society. We can produce a society defined by holistic, genetic-social-economic-cultural-educational-aesthetic equality. We can bequeath a society defined by justice, beauty, creativity, meritocracy, fairness, well-being, and reason to our children. If we want to. While you are not responsible for the world you have inherited, you are responsible for re-producing it. The world would not exist as it is if it was not constantly reproduced over each new generation. Things can only persist if they are constantly reproduced.

If this is the only life we shall have the opportunity to experience, then we should seek to optimize our experience of it. If we live forever, then we have an even greater incentive to optimize our experience of life, for we will be experiencing it eternally. The world which we hand on to our children can be a better one than the one which we inherited. It is up to you. The time to act is now.

Moral behavior vs moral intention

Moral behavior is that which is merely intended to avoid punishment, bad 'karma', or any other negative consequences. Charity which addresses the fear that the tables might one day turn, or a desire to ease our own empathic suffering, is also motivated by self-interest. Power is said to corrupt, but all it actually does is reduce our sense of vulnerability to suffering the consequences of our actions.

The invulnerability power provides allows the narrowly defined and perceived personal interests of the actor to dictate decisions, with no fear of the tables one day being turned, or of retribution from their victims. The powerful have no fear of 'justice'. Moral behavior involves negotiation and compromise within the balance of power of vested interest groups. Moral behavior requires a legalistic articulation of codes of behavior, and persuasion, or tactical 'reason(s)ing'. Moral behavior is a mere transaction of power and interests.

True moral intention could be defined as the intention of optimizing the outcomes of an interaction for everything that could be identified as having an interest in the interaction, and in the outcome. Moral intention would require moral judgment and a holistic comprehension of interactions and outcomes. Its referent would be the holistic balance of interests, rather than any particular set of narrow vested interests. Moral intention would require ways of articulating interests and relationships, and applying moral reason.

Personal Empowerment

Personal empowerment is the power to define things for yourself. This includes deciding personally what sort of life is worth living, which of your urges and desires you will satisfy and which you will deny yourself. It means you define for yourself your active sexuality, spirituality, and lifestyle, when and how you will die, whether you will put up with things or try to change them, and how you will define your own personal success and happiness.

The power of Narrow Convention to stifle transformation

We must consider at this point the power of narrow convention to reproduce ignorance and stifle human evolution and personal transformation. Humans often define themselves as others define them, and have definitions imposed on them by others which they are powerless to remove or change. Most humans gain material benefits, and experience a sense of security and satisfaction, at gaining others' approval, social acceptance, and recognition. The currency with which positive definitions are gained and maintained is often at minimum a passive subscription to the values or definitions of powerful groups in the community. These have more often than not been historically defined by narrow convention, racism, sexism, nationalism, jingoism, and religious and political dogma.

To know the world as best we can

Problematic language usages interact in the popular language culture to reflexively reinforce invalid formulations of the nature of things. Concepts which would be considered at best tenuous on their own, nominally support and reinforce each other in intricately interdependent ways. They tend to lend each other subtle forms of validation and legitimacy, often unconsciously on the part of participants in discourses. It is from these most basic of building blocks that discourses and world-views are constructed.

Many of these constitute, and/or emerge from, belief systems which are insidious and ubiquitous, and thoroughly naturalized. We are therefore unaware of them, and take them for granted. We take them to be 'natural'. We don't challenge or interrogate them. We wouldn't even think to. We accept them as given. These systems distort our experiences of things.

We then define what we experience in problematic ways which effectively decouple our subjective or social reality from the objective or primary reality. We cannot expect that we will optimally interact with our environment, with reality, when we are essentially responding to our own faulty definitions and ideas of reality, rather than to reality itself. Our judgments will be faulty, based as they are, on faulty assumptions, interpretations, and perceptions. Such judgments will have consequences, and costs.

The proper objective of philosophy and science must be to know the world as best we can, so that we may live in it the best we can, and enjoy the most positive life experiences possible.

Most people are happy to point the finger at other people's fatuous notions and beliefs, while maintaining a smug air of complacency regarding their own equally ridiculous ideas. It is sheer arrogance to claim that any particular dogma is superior to any other dogma.

However in order to communicate with people who are living in their own particular secondary and social realities, we have to enter their particular secondary and social realities, and learn their definitions, assumptions, and ways of interpreting the objective or primary reality, the 'external' world.

We need to remain outside their secondary and social realities, firmly in touch with the 'external', primary, or objective reality to remain productive, however we must enter into their 'internal' worlds to some extent, to be in a position to make it transparent for ourselves, and ideally, if we can manage it, for them.

You can't productively approach the subject of religious rituals designed to appeal to 'the gods', without understanding the concept of appealing to the gods, and that the gods, in the actor's minds, are something that can be appealed to. Without understanding that the actors assume that gods exist, and that they can be appealed to, to guarantee the success of a harvest, the fertility of a wife, or the success of a military action, you can make any real sense of the notion of designing a ritual to appeal to the gods.

You would have no chance to make sense of the ritual without first understanding the actors' assumptions, beliefs or perceptions concerning gods, and the potential to appeal to them, to gain their favor and thereby to gain their assistance. In this example the meaning of gods, appeals, and rituals, are all reflexive. If gods exist but they aren't moved by sacrifices, or may be impressed but are powerless to help, then the rituals lose their meanings.

Similarly, the statement 'washing your hands is hygienic' only makes sense if you understand that bacteria exist, and can make you sick. The meaning of the statement is reflexive of the awareness of the existence of bacteria and other hygiene concepts. From a scientific standpoint, the optimal one we have, the statement makes no sense without compelling arguments concerning the existence of bacteria which can infect patients, and the efficacy of hygiene protocols in combating them.

Sacrificing a virgin to the gods only makes sense when we understand that the actors believe that gods exist, that they can be appealed to, that the gods view the sacrifice of virgins as a positive sign of respect, and that in

response to this show of respect they can and will grant the actors favors. The meaning of the behavior of those sacrificing the virgin is reflexive of their definitions about the nature of reality, in this case of 'the gods'. They may believe that they have 'angered the gods', and can appease them through sacrifice.

The formulation, 'we have angered the gods and shall make peace with them through a human sacrifice', only makes sense in terms of the reflexive meanings that have been assigned by the actors to the actions and to reality. The statement would make no sense where there were no gods, or where the gods could not be angered, or where the gods could not be appeased, or where they could not be appeased by human sacrifice. If we invalidate any of these assumptions, these assigned meanings, then the statement, the language formulation, and the action, all cease to make sense. There would be no compelling reason to sacrifice anyone.

In the case of human sacrifice it may be simple for us to show that it will not have the desired outcome. The example may seem obvious. We don't sacrifice humans to 'the gods' anymore, you might say. However when we come to our daily lives, we take so many things for granted. We fail to recognize that many of our actions are informed by invalid, false, erroneous assumptions, beliefs and distorted or hegemonically corrupted interpretations of reality, which we mistake for objective perceptions.

The consequences, the costs, are at least as devastating as those in the example of human sacrifice. It took thousands of years for us to recognize that sacrificing humans was not an efficacious way to guarantee success in warfare, or harvests. We abandoned some assumptions and became more 'scientific'. For a 'modern' person human sacrifice seems barbaric and pointless. To people living a thousand years from now, most of our social practices and definitions will appear equally barbaric and stupid.

How we interpret the world we experience, how we define the nature of reality and the reality of our natures, determines how we behave towards each other, and how we interact with our world. The more closely our internal, secondary, or social reality, our definitions and assumptions, correspond with the objective, primary, external reality, the greater are our chances at optimizing our life experience and of realizing our potential for positive life experience.

Where we assume that plague is the result of some God's displeasure with us, reflexively assuming some god or gods exist, and can be displeased, then we will attempt to regain the gods pleasure through some votive ritual or offering. Where we assume that rats carry fleas which spread plague, we will improve the sanitary conditions of our towns, and root out rat infestations. Praying makes sense reflexively in relation to the assumptions about gods. Sanitation and rat poison makes sense reflexively in relation to knowledge about rats, fleas, plagues, and hygiene. Of course killing virgins or praying will not solve the problems, if gods don't exist, and can't be appealed to via such acts.

Virgins will suffer, and people will continue to die from plague, until more valid assumptions inform more efficacious, effective, responses.

Human sexuality is an area where reflexive definitions or assumptions are rampant. Where we assume some god made man, and defined homosexuality as a sin, then we will define homosexuality as perverse, as a sin, and even as a crime. If homosexuality is merely a natural variation of human sexuality, an alternative to heterosexuality that is no better or worse, merely a part of the continuum or spectrum of human sexual experience, then homosexuals will be free to love according to their natures, rather than victimized.

Personal and Social Transformation

This book aims to further the process of human social evolution. This evolution requires the transformation of humans from political beings who negotiate and compromise to maximize the balance of their vested interests, into enlightened, quasi-moral, principal driven agents who seek to optimize outcomes in the interests of everything with a possible 'stake' in the process and outcomes. It is the difference between individuals seeking opportunities to exploit inequality, to individuals seeking to produce a society defined by synergies. This requires the ability to identify interests and articulate them in ways that inform decision making and action. It also requires a comprehension of TROONATNOOR. Such understandings can inform social practices, and be translated into principles which can be used to guide principled actions. What is required is a deep change in motivation, and hence behavior based, on an enlightened commitment to principles.

Noetic evolution

Noetic evolution requires that competing definitions be made explicit and compete in the arena of reason, with only the valid definitions being allowed to survive and reproduce. This means testing the validity of assumptions and the beliefs they either knowingly, or as often is the case, unwittingly, inform. It requires that the inter-relationships and interdependencies between all assumptions and beliefs, implicit and explicit, be revealed, articulated, and thereby made transparent, so that they are available to critical analysis.

The process is iterative. As interdependencies are revealed, they direct our attention to the significance of particular assumptions. These assumptions then become targets for interrogation. Under interrogation these assumptions are de-constructed, broken down further. At this level any particular assumption may reveal itself to be in fact a whole set of implicit assumptions. This set will then need to be analyzed, and the process continued.

As arguments are de-constructed, the information gained informs the analysis of other arguments. Interdependent sets of questionable or volatile assumptions and arguments exist beneath an apparently stable surface. Some arguments can be reconstructed, though we will be compelled to abandon others totally, having been revealed to be not compelling, even fatuous and absurd. These changes often represent a change in the assumptions which underlie other apparently unrelated arguments. These arguments will need to be revised in light of these changes, in a continuing process which is iterative and reflexive.

The first principle of social transformation is personal transformation. Of course social transformation is what drives personal transformation in the majority of individuals.

Throughout history individuals have emerged whose ideas and innovations have shaped the society they or following generations lived in. Most people are passive consumers of social evolution. The majority are the beneficiaries of the efforts of a small minority. The majority inherit social transformations, ways of defining, relating, and behaving. A few innovators and leaders produce value, in the form of knowledge, processes, or technologies, which are then consumed and reproduced by the many. The many inherit knowledge and technologies they themselves could never have managed to produce. We inherit our culture for the most part. Few of us actually do more than re-produce culture. Few of us are active participants. Most of us are consumers of inherited protocols. We rarely challenge, question, or interrogate our inheritances. We merely accept them as given, as the natural order of things. We don't consider there might be alternative, let alone superior, ways of being, defining, relating, and behaving.

The first step in active personal transformation is self-interrogation. We must recognize the narrow vested interests we ourselves have in particular ways of defining things, and in the relationships and conditions these inform. It is easy to criticize others. Critical self-reflection is the far greater challenge.

We must accept that we ourselves, independent of our relative lack of privilege, power, and influence, Vis a Vis those with more, still enjoy particular privileges Vis a Vis others with less power than ourselves. We exploit this power in the exact same way as we are ourselves exploited. Most people do not concern themselves with inequality per se. They merely concern themselves with their own relative lack of privileges. We are not concerned with global exploitation of the poor masses. We concern ourselves with the particular fact that others have more than we do. This does not reflect a motivation in changing the whole system of relations of exploitation. Rather, it reflects a narrow motivation with merely improving our personal standing in this system of relations of exploitation.

We do not wish to challenge inequality in principle. We merely seek to ensure no one is more privileged than ourselves. We don't seek principled structural changes. We merely seek to promote our inherited, narrow vested interests as we have been taught to perceive and define them. We tend, generally speaking, towards hypocrisy. We complain about inequality but protect our own privileges. We must always be careful to make our own

constellation of relationships and interests transparent, and avoid defending our own vested interests when principled general interests conflict with or threaten our own little perks, benefits, and advantages.

This is of course a function, not only of self-interest, but of an inability to recognize the genuine, authentically superior quality of particular principles and the compellingness of particular types of 'scientific' or rigorously reasoned, dogma-free, arguments. In a situation where actors are not able to recognize the superior merits of arguments or principles of behavior which they find emotionally unsatisfying or even threatening, it is reasonable to anticipate that they will not be moved by them, or act according to them. They will stay within their perceived vested interests and comfort zones.

Further, you are only likely to sacrifice some advantages if you recognize the real cost of defending them. The real cost is the opportunity cost, the alternatives or opportunities lost. You will only give up something you value if you believe you will get something even more valuable in return. Our perception of the value for ourselves of competing alternatives will determine our action. Of course first we must be aware of the alternatives. You also need to be able to distinguish between arguments qualitatively, to determine which arguments are most compelling and which are specious sophistry. You need to be in a position to interrogate competing arguments, to evaluate their relative merits.

It is a vicious circle. You need to be enlightened to recognize the merits of arguments, while the way to enlightenment is through those very arguments. This is why movements along the path to enlightenment occurs in fits and bursts. This is why enlightenment itself is often experienced 'holistically'. Suddenly we become aware of a big picture that had eluded us. Up until this point we only managed, iteratively, to become aware of some of the pieces of the big picture. We can have no idea how close or far away we are from this 'big picture' suddenly becoming transparent to us.

This transparency is often experienced as an 'epiphany', a sudden awareness or consciousness, as if all the pieces of a giant puzzle have been solved more or less independently, and then, all of a sudden, they fall into place simultaneously, as a whole. The pieces must often be solved with logic and experience.

It is only when enough pieces have been solved that the relationships between all the pieces can be exposed or perceived. It is the relationships between all the pieces that produces 'meaning'. It is the recognition of this 'meaning' that provides enlightenment. It is only the 'whole' that can have meaning, as meaning is the relationship between things.

Some people who have recognized ethical positions will still deny the superiority of particular beliefs, cultures, definitions, relationships, or systems, to maintain their personal privileges and emotional comfort zones. They will appeal to the notion of cultural relativity and deny that any argument can be qualitatively distinguished from, and therefore superior or inferior to, any other.

They privately recognize the truth, but they appeal publicly to 'cultural relativity' to claim that no argument is more or less compelling than any other. They keep the truth to themselves, and construct specious sophistry, propaganda, and 'social reality'. They obstructify. They deny the notion of superiority in principle, by subscribing to the notion of relativity.

Under relativity no argument or way of being or seeing or doing or relating can be defined as superior to any other. They will insist on their right to have their beliefs and practices 'tolerated', as they grudgingly, for public consumption, 'tolerate' the beliefs of others. At the same time they ridicule and deride them in private.

This sort of behavior is intrinsic to the denial of the superiority of beauty and, to a lesser extent, intelligence, or that some things are intrinsically superior to others. In this way people are reflexively denying publicly that others are superior or better than themselves. Of course in private they are jealous that others are smarter or more attractive than they are. By devaluing in a public forum the value of particular traits, they avoid the reflexive disadvantage of having that public define them as inferior with regard to those possessing those traits, the beautiful and intelligent.

Such a discrepancy between their personal private evaluations and their public statements is also intrinsic to a desire to reconcile their personal dissatisfaction with their appearance, talents, intelligence, and faults, all of which

their offspring are bound to inherit, with a desire to reproduce themselves, and all these particular qualities. To accept that they would be inflicting negative traits upon their not-yet-conceived children would be to define their reproduction as unethical, problematic, and questionable. If no traits are superior, and none inferior, then no harm can be ascribed to everyone reproducing independent of the inheritance they will inflict or bequeath on the not-yet-conceived.

Relativity and denial of the possibility of objective evaluations of arguments

The denial that it is possible to judge arguments by more or less objective criteria is a function of the fear that the application of such criteria to most arguments would compel us to abandon them. Those promoters of dogma and fatuous, specious sophistry, recognize that their beliefs are not compelling, and would not withstand interrogation and transparency.

Most people 'tolerate' others beliefs publicly, as they mock them privately, in order to have their own pet dogmas and lies, denials, self-deceits and fictions at least publicly tolerated, if not validated. Most people's beliefs are equally uninformed and non-compelling. Most are in fact fatuous specious sophistry and dogma. They are therefore hostile to any process of interrogation.

They are unwilling to publicly recognize the possibility of universally applicable and objective measures of arguments. They will not risk having any such measures applied to their own belief systems. They would rather allow others to believe 'stupid', 'ridiculous' things, than to risk having their own beliefs interrogated.

Remember that you cannot force anyone to submit to interrogation. They will be hostile to the truth, and to any real transparency. They don't want to have to give up convenient and satisfying myths. They are terrified of having to admit things they have been denying, to face reality. They will be hostile to any processes that they fear may be able to establish these truths. For the most part, you will have to interrogate their reality unilaterally, without their co-operation.

You will have to do your best to construct compelling arguments to convince them and reassure them that it is in their interests to submit to the truth. At the end of the day, most truths are imposed on the majority by the minority, in their interests.

While you believe you are interlocuting with people, they will often merely be seeking weapons to use against you, looking for ways to attack you, to prove you wrong, to undermine you. Don't be fooled, or too optimistic. You will be disappointed. You are searching for the truth. They are merely seeking to win.

Don't expect too much, and don't waste too much emotional energy. Do your best to produce transparency, but don't expect to convert anyone, or have any real impact in your interactions. Their real value is to reveal to you how most people behave, and to provide you with valuable clues as to how they think, so that you might be able to address their ignorance and fears in your later work, and find ways to appeal to them.

You study public opinion not because it is valuable and insightful, but because it provides you with insights into most peoples mixed up, uninformed ways of thinking. Your engagement with most people won't produce much positive change in most people as they are not open to change.

A trained monkey is a trained monkey. Don't expect too much of it. It isn't fair on you. It isn't fair on the monkey. If you can't drag them up, at very least don't let them drag you down.

Defensiveness

The process of noetic evolution may sound calm and cool headed, and although this is the ideal state under which to conduct evaluations of arguments, it will generally be the exception. Beliefs and assumptions are so emotionally loaded that the energy released when assumptions are 'threatened' can be explosive. The energy 'released' will be a function of the immediate and interdependent vested interests, satisfactions, and material benefits that the assumptions or beliefs are perceived to provide. Such work is not for the faint of heart. The process will be too daunting for many. Many will, with smug complacency, live in denial that their beliefs are anything but 'self-evident truths'. Many will simply fail to comprehend, as they lack the requisite skills and abilities to follow the rigorous and intense reasoning process.

Deception and denial

Since insurance companies began using lie detectors on their telephone conversations, 25% of all cars reported as stolen have magically been returned to their owners! Lying, deception, mendacity, is intrinsic to human nature. Deception is instrumental (practical) and affective (emotional). We employ deception as a means to various ends. We seek a competitive advantage in deception. We defend assumptions, definitions, and systems of relations we are the beneficiaries of. We defend beliefs we find emotionally comforting and satisfying with disingenuous specious sophistry. The best liars first deceive themselves. Like the Nazi bureaucrats who never had to get their own hands dirty, most people kid themselves they are innocent of any 'violence'. However 'when a man lies, he murders a part of the world', to quote James Hetfield of Metallica. I would add for James' sake that when a man hunts down and kills a bear that never meant him any harm, he does something similar.

Articulating interdependencies and interrogation Revelations of transparency

In order to be able to articulate beliefs, you have to be able to articulate the interdependencies that exist between beliefs, and recognize the reflexive and iterative nature of beliefs, and the language, including the underlying implicit assumptions within that language, used to formulate them. You have to recognize that any statement is part of a wider 'discourse' of connected definitions, assumptions, and arguments. The highest form of articulation is transparency.

Given that most belief systems are poorly articulated, let alone transparent, an essential skill in analyzing beliefs, and the systems within which they are embedded, is interrogation. The objective of interrogation is to attain as great a degree of transparency as possible, to make all implicit arguments, assumptions, and connections, explicit. This process will who benefits from any particular definitions, and who might have a motive for deceiving us.

Being able to interrogate and fully articulate beliefs is the first step to being in a position to evaluate them. The more clearly articulated beliefs are, the easier it is to consider their merits. As each belief is 'de-constructed', or broken down into the assumptions and arguments that make it up, these, and their influence on the totality of the belief system, can be evaluated.

Much of the discussion in this book has the objective of making the nature of reality, and the principles which underlie human interactions, transparent. Holistically enlightened self-interest and compassion (empathy) drives the philosopher to seek to penetrate, demystify, and de-construct apparently impenetrable, often ineffable, arguments and belief systems.

My holistically enlightened, self-interested optimisation, has the potential to produce a world that, in its outcomes, would approximate a 'moral' one.

When we talk about transparency, we are referring to the art of making implicit assumptions or arguments explicit. A transparent argument presents itself in a form which encourages, facilitates, and therefore promotes, interrogation. As arguments are interrogated they become increasingly transparent. This increasing transparency iteratively drives the interrogation process, as what is revealed encourages and facilitates further interrogation.

It is the same in a criminal investigation, where answers to questions prompt further questions, revealing further information, which prompts and facilitates further interrogations. These interrogations often reveal connections between what initially appeared to be totally unrelated investigations. In the same way that conspiracies are discovered in the legal world, hegemonic belief systems are found in the 'noetic world', the world of beliefs and definitions. As individual pieces fall into place, and inform initially apparently unrelated investigations, they reveal themselves as being part of an even bigger picture. As the investigations develop, interrogations which initially appeared totally unrelated begin to inform each other iteratively, providing the right questions to get to the bottom of it all.

When all the right questions are asked and answered, the pieces fall into place to reveal the big picture. Then, in hindsight, we see how elegantly the hegemonic system has evolved, as a product of our collective individual natures, and the occasional deliberate, planned strategies of particular narrow vested interest groups. What is revealed, finally, is that ultimately people have to want to be seduced. We may like to blame individuals and particular groups, but they only managed to gain support or toleration for their actions as they appealed to a much broader base of motivation. As above so below.

No-one can be seduced unless they let themselves be. Injustice can only occur within the wider framework that is implicitly consented to by all participants. We may be 'victims' of the system at times, but the system only exists with our collective consent. In principle most people behave no less opportunistically than a Hitler, Stalin, or Caligula. They merely have fewer opportunities to express their opportunistic impulses.

Evil is mundane. It is a reflection of our own natures, rather than some rare and special abomination. Evil is not 'exclusive' and 'different' from the mundane. It is merely an extension of it, and a reflection of it. It couldn't exist and prosper unless it fed on a fundamental underlying current within the everyday world. If you validate opportunism as the principle of action, then you validate injustice in principle. You are equally responsible for the small-scale injustices as the large-scale ones. As long as you are the perpetrator of any injustice, you cannot claim to be innocent when it is your turn to be a victim.

The opportunity costs of (blissful?) ignorance

If you never interrogate, you will never find that you have been lied to, and you will trust people, and see no reason for caution. It seems that most people accept what they are told the first time. They then go on to live their lives (blissfully?) unaware of the opportunity costs of their naiveté, the opportunities and possibilities that have been denied them, and the costs and problems they could have been spared. They will look at my behavior critically, implying or stating that I am too cynical or negative or just looking for problems. They have had no problems (that they are aware of), and find no reason not to trust whoever tells them and whatever they are told. After all, no-one (that they are aware of) has ever lied to them. They imagine that I must be the problem, to have had so many problems.

My experience has taught me to that I need to ask a question of at least 5 different people who are supposed to know the answer before I should even consider being confident about what I have been told. I have usually only found out the truth about something by being very persistent. I usually end up at the highest level of management. The 5 people I 'interrogated' usually supplied me with enough information to tell the final person what their own policy or responsibility was, and what my rights were.

It is only then that this last person does what should have been done all along, or tells me what I should have been told in the first place. I have been lied to by so many junior and senior bureaucrats that to document them all would deprive me of time for much else. After polite insistence I often end up in a room with them and their supervisor, who informs them that I was right.

Of course they are then friendly and want me to pretend that the whole thing never happened. What I have learned is this: get everything in writing. If you haven't got it in writing, it never really did happen! You will need incontrovertible, undeniable proof, so that they feel vulnerable to the possibility of being held accountable. If there is no real risk of consequences, people tend to do whatever is easiest, most satisfying, and most rewarding for themselves.

Many people feel powerless to change being the victim of injustice, so they would rather remain ignorant and naive, or repress or deny reality, so that they don't need to feel frustrated at being powerless to do anything.

The negotiation of reality

Few people will demand that you be authentic, and live in the 'real' primary world. Many will of course want to recruit you into their worlds, to increase its density, its 'social reality'. If you get enough people onto your reality, you can get it adopted and legitimated as the 'social' reality. This is what we refer to as 'hegemony'.

The reality with the most influence becomes the hegemonic social reality. It becomes, for all intensive purposes, in relation to relations of power and privilege, the reality. Anyone who challenges this reality will be defined as a heretic, or to be more modern about it, 'mentally ill'. Power is the power to define reality, at least social reality. Of course in terms of our human existence, social reality has as much impact upon our lives as any other reality.

Gods that don't exist can still 'get you dead' as quickly, and often more painfully, than the poisonous venom of a snake, or famine, or flood. We usually die from the consequences of our systems of social relations well before 'natural' consequences catch up with us. Do we actually want justice? I mean for everyone, not just for ourselves, and ours

When I was more naive, I thought that the problem that faced us was to find the truth, and the means to attain justice for all. Experience has taught me that most people are only interested in justice for themselves, and whichever 'truths' are most convenient and rewarding for themselves. It is one thing to reveal the means to achieving natural justice. It is quite another thing to get people to adopt these means, to actually implement these protocols, to actually seek natural justice for everyone.

Philosopher, interrogate thyself

We must learn how to formulate and ask questions. We must insist on being pedantic.

We must search for the hidden implicit assumptions which underlie all discourses within the hegemonic system of defining and relating. Naturalized assumptions distort and corrupt all reasoning and defining processes. They are invidious and ubiquitous. They are simply taken for granted. We take them to be 'self-evident'. These assumptions are the most slippery to get a hold on, the most torpid to make transparent, and hence the hardest to interrogate. We must continually delve into deeper levels of composition, and into the wider networks of interdependent, internally-nominally-self-validating, assumptions and arguments that might in any way interact with our arguments. Remember that all meanings are reflexive.

We must learn how to interrogate our own arguments. We must avoid taking anything for granted, as given, as normal, as natural, as self-evident, as obvious. We must be suspicious of every detail in an argument. We must assert our right to be suspicious. We must encourage others to interrogate our belief systems.

We must be willing to actively challenge our own assumptions and evaluate how compelling our own beliefs are. Philosopher, interrogate thyself! Only when we demand this of ourselves, can we demand it of others. Only then are we in a position to interrogate others, to interrogate their individual 'subjective realities', and our collective, 'social realities'.

Ideally interrogation is a co-operative effort, between the holder of beliefs and those that are critically evaluating them. However this is rarely the case. Most people find interrogation to be threatening. Most people are fundamentally insecure and terrified of being exposed as wrong or silly. At a very basic and powerful level we have an abject fear of losing status, acceptance, and approval.

The ultimate and most fundamental motivating fear we have regards disapproval, rejection, and abandonment. This may appear irrational until we understand the fundamental condition that we as humans are conceived into. We are, as social animals, dependent on our peers for our material security and emotional well-being. Being rejected and abandoned by our family, friends, and community ultimately means death. When an Australian Aboriginal tribal elder 'points the bone' and ostracizes a member of their clan, it ultimately results in death for the outcast.

'Pointing the bone', like excommunicating someone as a heretic, witch, or mentally ill, all invalidate the person on such a level that they do cease to exist in the social reality of the community. They are 'exiled'. They are abandoned to die.

Challenges in the pursuit of intellectual rigor

Intellectual rigor is the only tool the philosopher has to battle with the definitions, assumptions, and arguments that form the basis of the hegemonic social reality. Much of these arguments are cleverly constructed and deliberately obfuscationist, designed to mystify, to deflect interrogation, and prevent transparency. Other arguments have merely evolved organically as reflexive of TROONATNOOR.

As the deliberately mystifying and obfuscationist arguments have been deliberately employed to serve a purpose, these deliberate strategies can be identified, and analyzed. By interrogating the motivations of those who constructed them, we can reveal much about our basic natures, and the more organic arguments, assumptions and definitions that have emerged without any real strategy or long term plan.

This is important, as it is ultimately the more organic assumptions, definitions, and arguments that have the greatest impact on our lives, on our 'social reality'. These are of course by nature the harder to detect and interrogate, having become such a fundamental part of our social fabric, our social 'substance', that they are incredibly hard to 'make out'. They are perfectly adapted, if you will. Their camouflage is immaculate.

We find it easier to criticize others, and to validate criticisms of others. We are often only lead to interrogate ourselves when our interrogations of historically 'significant' events, individuals, and regimes disappointingly directs our attentions towards the more mundane and every-day, and ultimately to our own small part in the perpetuation and reproduction of 'social realities'. It is often easier to identify faults when they are magnified in conspicuous, large scale, historical events. It is only after we have adequately comprehended the nature of these events that we begin to recognize our own responsibility for such 'events', our own little part in 'history'.

We first learn to criticize others, before we learn to criticize ourselves. It is easier to point the finger, rather than question our own values, behaviors, and motivations. The historical figures of 'evil' are merely blown up, cartoon-like caricatures of ourselves. They are like large-scale models which allow us to see the details more clearly. Inevitably our analysis of 'evil' brings us to the recognition that evil is merely the mundane projected onto a bigger screen, the everyday amplified by socio-historical constellations which represented favorable 'opportunities' for the everyday evil to express itself, flourish, and grow. Our research into 'evil' compels us to accept how mundane it really is.

It compels us to look in the mirror. It denies us the opportunity to escape responsibility, by defining evil as something different from us. Intellectually rigorous and honest evaluations deny us the opportunity to legitimately 'demonize' historical figures. We find that they, in principle, merely behaved, on a larger scale, how we ourselves act on a daily basis. We begin looking for 'evil' to distance ourselves from history, but we end up looking at ourselves in the mirror, and having to accept our own personal responsibilities for 'history'. Our motivation is to define the otherness of evil, but our quest leads us inexorably to a recognition of its sameness. It leads us to recognize that large scale evil cannot emerge and wreak its terrible toll without a broad base of small scale, every-day, inconspicuous, mundane, injustice, unfairness, opportunistic exploitation, and victimization.

Naturalisation and Normalisation in language

Naturalisation and normalisation are sociological concepts which refer to the fact that we accept many things as simply natural or normal, without question. Often they are in fact very problematic. Some examples can demonstrate how culturally determined the notion of 'natural' or 'normal' are. Before the 1970's females were paid half as much as males doing the same job. They had to quit this job when they married.

In the 1800's you could be imprisoned for asking for a pay rise. Unions were illegal and membership was a criminal offense. Genital mutilation is common in some cultures. It is still common today even in developed nations to circumcise male babies, while in other cultures the clitoris is removed from infant girls. In most societies it is considered normal and natural that some individuals possess great wealth while others endure lives of chronic, abject poverty.

The problematic nature of language

There appears to be a general lack of recognition of the problematic nature of language.

Language is not the simple tool that most people assume it to be. Language must be used with extreme care and attention, to avoid producing and reproducing invalid arguments, assumptions, and definitions. The lack of appreciation of the problems of language and communication is evident in the criticisms of Philosophers as being pedantic, in agonizing over the definitions of words and concepts.

Philosophers use language more rigorously than it is employed in the popular language culture. The popular language culture is full of obfuscationist, mystifying, and imprecise language usages. Even the language of supposed 'scientists' is no immune from such problems. This is most noteworthy in relation to discussions concerning evolution.

The main tool and raw material of the philosophical trade is language. We must use it with great care. Problematic language usages produce and reproduce faulty reasoning. They make specious arguments appear compelling. They make problems appear more complex than they are. Most of the 'problems' philosophers face are merely artifacts of poor language usages.

They are pseudo-problems that dissolve as soon as we correct the language usages they were constructed from. The best engineering cannot compensate for poor materials. Logic is not enough to guarantee compelling arguments. If the assumptions you base your argument on are wrong, the best logic in the world cannot ensure your conclusions are correct. Logic merely ensures reflexive, definitional, or synthetic truth.

The basis of all of our arguments is language. Language arises from a need to express and communicate ideas. Mathematics is a tool for calculating, but not essentially for critical reasoning itself. Conceptual problems can be expressed mathematically, but their meanings are always functions of language. Mathematical symbols are a sub-set of the language which poses the questions that mathematics deals with. All solutions are finally expressed in the 'meaningful' context of language. Language is the context within which mathematical problems take place, and which give mathematical expressions their meaning.

Language arises reflexively from the need to use it. Language facilitates the construction of meaning by allowing the relationships between things to be expressed. Our need for greater language resources increases according to our desire to more precisely differentiate things, and to describe their relationships to other things. When the available language formulations are inadequate for the tasks they must perform, terms and concepts are borrowed from other languages, or new words are 'coined'.

Every word is in fact a concept of something, in that it represents an idea. Concepts are implicit arguments. We must be careful to avoid assuming that our meanings and language usages are universally valid for everyone. By assuming that language and communication are that simple, we risk making huge mistakes, and reproducing, unknowingly, those we have 'inherited'.

We must be very demanding in terms of the rigor with which we use language. We can only reason clearly and precisely if our concepts are clear and precise.

All arguments, theories, assumptions and beliefs, exist in relation to each other. A change in one particular part of the total system of beliefs can change the whole set of relationships, and ultimately the totality of these belief systems. Our beliefs and opinions are informed, consciously or not, by more and less integrated sets of assumptions and arguments. All of these things form the substrata of our decision making. The more valid the information used in decision-making is, the more likely these decisions themselves will be sound ones.

Most people have never interrogated their belief systems as a whole. We must empower people to be able to interrogate their total belief systems, their noetic structures, to bring to their awareness the incompatible and

contradictory nature of many of their beliefs and assumptions. This is the sort of project Socrates was engaged in on a very personal basis with each of his interlocutors, the people of Athens. He led them to expose the implicit and therefore hidden contradictions in their arguments.

The meaning of Meaning

The word communication comes from the Latin 'communicatio', meaning 'to have in common'. When we communicate we seek to transfer meanings, to have them 'in common' or 'shared' by the interlocutors, the speaker and listener, the writer and reader.

Meaning is the relation between things. One thing has meaning in relation to other things. Things generate meaning by association with other things. Meanings are reflexive amongst themselves. Changing the meaning of one thing will impact on the meaning of other things.

The word cat refers to the animal. We use the word cat by convention. It is a shared convention in the English language, so the meaning is shared by all who understand English. The thing could be a feeling, a phenomena, or an object. The word or phrase could also describe the way things relate to one another, such as employer and employee. These are all examples of denotative language. Words have official or conventional meanings which are potentially universal and shared.

However there are over a million English words so even native speakers are often unfamiliar with words, or use them 'unconventionally'. The millions of people using English as their second language could be expected to have even more problems. It is always advisable, therefore, to explicitly check that interlocutors are not 'talking past each other'.

We must ensure we are using words with the same intentions, to convey the same ideas, the same meanings. Otherwise we are likely to misunderstand each other, without realizing it. We cannot correct for what we are not aware of. This is one of the most common and treacherous traps we fall into when seeking to communicate.

Idiomatic or figurative language also poses potential 'traps' to miscommunication. And as if all this were not enough, words can also have particular, personal meanings for individuals which are connotative. In the same way that a smell or sound or color can have different meanings for each of us, depending on the experiences we associate with them, words can have emotional associations. Connotative language is loaded with meanings not necessarily held in common by those attempting to communicate, those participating in the attempted, intended, transfer of meaning.

This can prevent the transfer of the intended meaning from speaker to listener. The listener may 'interpret' the communication differently than it was intended by the speaker. The speaker and listener may end up not sharing meanings. Any 'unilateral meanings' can produce a 'distortion' in communication that is not evident to either the speaker or the listener. Where the interlocutors are unaware of such distortions they may go un-addressed, and produce *mis*-communication. Precise communication requires the exchange of meaning, not just the transmission of words. In this way we have to explicitly agree on the meanings particular language will be given in a statement, rather than implicitly assume that the meanings are already shared.

Spanish speakers were amused by the decision by General Motors Holden to name one of its models 'Nova'. For the English speaking marketing gurus the name Nova, Latin for 'new', expressed modernity. However in Spanish 'No Va' means 'doesn't go'. I always laughed at the car brand name 'Citroen', which reads like 'citrone' or 'lemon'. If a car is a 'lemon', in Australian idiom, it is a car that will give you nothing but problems.

The swastika symbolizes peace and prosperity for the Buddhist and Hindu. For most modern westerners it is a symbol of Nazi horrors. The symbol has different associations for people from different cultures and backgrounds. Many tourists traveling in Asia, are puzzled when they come across Buddhist or Hindu shrines covered in swastikas. The Paderborn 'Kunden-Zentrum' (Customer Service Center) of Siemens innocently planned to use the abbreviation KZ, before the unfortunate association with the Nazi 'Konzentrations Lager', also referred to with the abbreviation KZ, occurred to anyone.

For such reasons it is advisable to avoid using language that has emotional resonances for the interlocutors. In Germany today they will talk of 'Sterbe-hilfe' rather than 'Euthanasia', due to the associations that word has with Nazi programs of systematic murder. Such 'cultural sensitivity' can avoid unnecessary confusion. By the same token no westerner would demand that the Balinese stop adorning their temples with swastikas.

In formulating statements it is important that all the participants, all the interlocutors, actively seek to make themselves and their partners aware of all the implicit and explicit meanings, assumptions, and definitions in any formulation or statement. We must anticipate and avoid the predictable problems that can occur in the transfer of meaning.

The loop emerges

The human genetic protocol in interaction with its natural environment constitutes the fundamental source of meanings or definitions for humans. The next level of meanings and definitions relate to the 'built' environment.

Genetic protocols, latent in energy, manifest in interactions, and 'build' organisms, including humans. Humans interact with each other and their natural environment. The 'built' environment which emerges as a product of this interaction has physical and social or 'cultural' elements. Culture refers to systems of definitions and relationships which emerge, and become institutionalized and thus naturalized.

The beneficiaries of these relationships and definitions go on to further 'manage' the culture in ways that serve their own interests. They actively and deliberately promote particular meanings from the greater pool of potential meanings, and 'construct' a social reality out of those that legitimates their powers and privileges. They legitimate, entrench, and widen their initial power, usually resulting from an inherited position, or the use of violence, via a domination of the popular culture and popular language culture.

They will control the relations of their sub-ordinates by controlling how things are defined within the culture. In this way they will iteratively accumulate ever greater power and privileges. This definitions and meanings employed by this class of 'beneficiaries' thus become hegemonic. The loop has now closed.

Unless you are present at the beginning, when the first 'loop' is being constructed, you will never guess that the loop you are in is anything other than the 'natural' order of things. All light is reflected inwards. All interrogations are deflected. The 'social reality' is seamless and seem-less. The card trick has already been set up. No matter how hard you follow the every move of the card trickster, you won't manage to see how the trick works.

You have to have been paying attention before the 'official' trick began. You have to have been there in the early days of the culture and society, back when culture and society per se were just emerging. The card-tricks were much cruder then, but sufficed for a cruder audience. We'd be amazed at how ingenious the tricksters were, and how easily tricked their audience was. However a more sophisticated observer would be just as dumbfounded at our present-day credulity and naivety.

Once the loop closes, it is very hard to escape the hegemonic ways of defining and being. The center of the 'sphere' has a gravity that attracts, and distracts every attempt to gain the altitude that would be needed to 'escape the bubble'.

The culture, the ways of defining things, these 'meanings', are inherited by the next generation who interact with this cultural inheritance mostly passively, re-producing it. In this way most meanings are re-produced over generations. Those who inherit privilege and power are often as unaware of how the system of relations and definitions that legitimate and reproduce their privilege and power came to be, than those who 'foot the bill'.

The beneficiaries are happy to define their privileges as natural, legitimate, and justified, and the victims are too ignorant, mystified, and busy surviving and competing for the crumbs that fall from the table of the privileged, to have any chance of 'cracking the code', even if they did inherit the intelligence and education that might facilitate such an 'interrogation'.

Meaning is holistic

Meaning emerges as a function of relationships. You are a thing, a living thing, an animal, a mammal, a human, a female, a citizen of a country, a mother, a sister, an Aunt, an employee, a friend, a lover, a sex object, an object of desire. You would cease to be all of these things if you were alone in a void. There you would just be. In fact, as there would be no not-you, no other, no environment to reflexively define yourself against, you would probably not be able to define yourself at all. All experience and meaning is reflexive. Perhaps the greatest hunger for sentience is to have an otherness, a not-self, to facilitate experience. Take a moment now to reflect on how terrible loneliness and boredom can be. Isolation is used as form of torture.

With children you are a mother. With a parent you are a daughter or son. With a partner you are a lover, a partner, perhaps a wife or husband, a girlfriend, a fiancée, or mistress. You can't be any of these things independent of their relational counterparts. If everything was friendly towards you and your interests, then you would have no concept for 'enemy'. If all relationships were mutually beneficial, synergistic, there would be no concept for conflict. Remember, all meanings are reflexive. Meanings are relational. The meaning of everything is its reflexive relationship to everything else.

The level of abstraction and the fallacy of composition

It is important to recognize the level of abstraction in language, from the general to the specific. For example, in a 'falling' level of abstraction we 'descend' from 'living things', to 'animals', to 'humans', to 'men', to 'Athenians', to 'Socrates'. A particular level of information is intrinsic to the level of abstraction of any term. The lower the level of abstraction, the more specific the meaning will be, and the less widely applicable the information regarding the object will be.

The conclusion or proof that 'Socrates has integrity', is only useful if we are dealing with Socrates. It has limited applications. The higher the level of abstraction, the more general the potential applications of the conclusions or proofs of an argument are. Animals must eat to survive. We can apply this information to all animals in general, giving it broad applications. The traditional aim of science and philosophy has been to seek universal conclusions that work at the highest possible level of abstraction, for example, universal laws of physics, or of ethics. We want conclusions, proofs, and laws that apply to Socrates, to all males, to all humans, to all animals, and to all living things.

It is important that conclusions at one level of abstraction are not automatically applied to other levels, resulting in erroneous statements such as, Socrates has integrity, therefore all humans have integrity. The beauty of the more universal law is that we can confidently claim that if some argument can be applied to all living things, then it necessarily, that is, logically, applies to Socrates.

We can deduce from higher levels of abstraction back to lower levels of abstraction, but not from lower levels of abstraction to higher levels. What holds true for all animals must hold true for Socrates, but what is true of Socrates cannot be assumed to be true of Socrates' cat. What we are talking about is the fallacy of composition.

The fallacy of composition arises when we assume that the characteristics or properties that exist at one level of composition exist at another level as well. This does not only refer to the level of abstraction, but to other factors such as time, size, position in a system of relations, or even the capacity to be aware of something. Socrates' cat may be aware of things Socrates is not. What benefits the slave owner does not automatically represent a benefit to the slave. What is good in the short term may be disastrous in the long term. What is good for the goose is not necessarily good for the gander. What may have served us well in the past might prove our undoing in the future.

Even intrinsic to defining something as 'solid' is the implicit adoption of a level of composition. In fact atoms never 'touch' at the atomic level of composition. Solidity is a concept, rather than an actual condition. It is reflexive of our human perception, and of the ways in which we generally interact with objects in the material world. We define solidity reflexively. A being that existed on the atomic scale or level of composition, one that was extremely small, would interact with a very different phenomena to what the human, on their human scale or level of composition, would experience.

An apple would be a constellation of atoms to the atom sized being. It would not see an apple, but a constellation of atomic-scale objects. It would perhaps experience the apple as a group of atoms, similar to how we experience the solar system. Most of what appears solid to humans would appear as empty space to the atomic-scale being. It would only experience the individual atoms as solid. We, as constellations of atoms, experience other constellations as 'wholes'. The atoms would experience their 'parts'.

A Nano-sized being, still smaller than the atomic-scale being, would have trouble making sense of the atom sized being's descriptions of what it perceived and experienced. To the Nano being the individual atoms would appear to be constellations of even smaller units of manifested energy. The atoms would be to the Nano being what the apple is to the human. Imagine the confusion and *mis*-communication that would occur! Of course a being that operated at the 'galactic' scale or level of composition would not see the Nano, atomic, or human world at all. To the

galactic being the planets would appear to be atoms revolving around the nucleus sun. At an even higher level of composition the entire universe might appear as a single entity. The Nano-sized being would assign a similar meaning to the apple as the human does to the universe. The larger-than-galactic being might assign the same meaning to the entire universe as the human does to the apple. The atomic being would ascribe a similar meaning to the apple as the human does to the solar system.

From the highest level of composition we could imagine, one which encompassed everything in the universe, and where an observer was exponentially bigger than this aggregate, this observer might be able to define the observed 'mass', as a single 'solid' entity, even possibly as a single organism, with a single awareness or consciousness. We may all be part of some sentient being, e should exercise our consciousness-awareness-perspectives so that they become flexible enough to consider such notions, and reflexively allow such a consciousness to inform our formulations about the nature of things.

If you lived in a black and white checkered universe in which the squares were bigger than you could measure past, you'd believe you were living in an entirely black, or alternatively, white, universe. This may be a valid analogy in relation to the problems arising due to the 'level of composition' we adopt when defining concepts and applying them.

TROONATNOOR: SOPHISTRY

The nature of our vulnerability to specious sophistry

Human beings exhibit a definitive vulnerability to specious sophistry, spurious correlations, and superstition. Survival over the most part of human history has been dependent on rapid responses to external stimuli. The swift reaction when something stirred in the forest meant the difference between becoming prey or catching it, and either way surviving. The benefits arising from the consideration of the long term implications of actions, and of adopting ethical standards, is relatively new in evolutionary terms.

We tend to be reflexive, short-term reactionaries, driven by ego and short term, unenlightened, narrow self-interest. We are also, generally speaking, poorly educated and trained with respect to the formulation and critical evaluation of arguments. This is a product of our human psychology and the social structures that have, up to now, emerged from it. They have come to hegemonically dominate it.

Our education and training systems focus exclusively on finding answers and solutions to questions and problems reflexive of the hegemonic system of relations definitions.

Such questions and problems include: how to wage war more effectively, how to maintain colonial expansion and exploitation, how to maintain population growth, how to increase production, how to stimulate demand, how to exploit nature, how to maintain the reproduction of genetic-socio-economic-cultural inequality and opportunistically exploit it, all the while maintaining and reproducing the inherited reflexive definitions and system of relations and balances of power.

The dominant hegemonic interests do not consider it in their interests for their 'subjects' to learn how to think, formulate their own problems, or interrogate their inherited definitions and systems of relations. This would empower them to challenge the dominant hegemonic interests and their privileges and powers.

The essential quality of power is a constant, even as its forms vary according to the socio-economic-historical-cultural times.

Power is the ability to define things and to have these definitions reproduced and institutionalized. At some point power becomes unobtrusive, virtually imperceivable, as these definitions become hegemonic, naturalized, normalized, taken for granted, taken as self-evident. They become the 'social reality' participants in the hegemonic system inhabit.

The particular forms of expression of power, and the benefits and privileges they provide the powerful, may vary from age to age, however the fundamental basis of power is and always has been, the ability to define. Pure violence can be effective in the short term, however the more subtle power to define is necessary for long term maintenance, legitimation, and validation of that power.

The most powerful actors are not the ones seen to wield power. The true power lies with those who 'pull the strings'. They do this quietly and unobtrusively, manipulating events and people to suit their interests. Few ever recognize their power. They appear harmless. Those observed to be wielding power will appear benevolent.

Adolf Hitler was never considered a real threat until it was too late. Both he and Napoleon, another despot, were not considered threats by their competition. They were unexceptional in appearance. Stalin was the same, in fact physically crippled. Others thought they could use them to their own ends, or 'control' them once they gave them power. Only after they had gained this power did their true genius for power become apparent.

The most wealthy and powerful rarely seek to expose their own power and wealth, let alone run for political office. They manipulate things through their connections. They control the media, and public opinion. They 'own' politicians. They have 'bought' them with generous political donations and so on. The average U.S senator must raise \$30,000 U.S per day merely to finance their next political campaign. The costs of a Presidential campaign are well over \$300 million U.S.

The most fundamental bases of power and privilege are the naturalized and normalized relations of opportunistic exploitation of inherited inequality, and the definitions and assumptions which ultimately naturalize, normalize, justify and legitimate these relations. This is what hegemony is all about. It is about who gets to define reality, or at least, social reality. Once you have this power, you can gain whatever other expressions of power, whatever privileges and benefits, you desire.

The education system has always been an institution which served the interests of the dominant powers. The focus of education has always been doing 'something' better, rather than asking what it is that should be done in the first place. To ask such questions would be to question, interrogate, and therefore challenge, the conventional orthodoxy, and the vested interest groups and the interests this orthodoxy and these conventions benefit.

Therefore the transformation of our culture into one dominated by enlightened holistic reason and holistically informed consent requires a transformation in our approaches to education. We must empower teachers and students to be able to formulate powerful questions, to engage hegemonic systems in interrogation, to challenge the definitions and assumptions they have inherited. To this end protocols for interrogation, the rules of engagement, need to be refined. The skills of the interrogator need to be honed until they become reflexes, until nothing is left unquestioned, and nothing is left unattended to.

We need to map out the current culture, to mark language formulations in the popular language culture, to identify implicit assumptions, and to illuminate the interdependent links between them.

We need to make our 'social reality' and the systems of relations and definitions which iteratively and reflexively constitute it, as transparent as possible. We need to constantly engage with these 'maps', constantly refining them, like 'noetic cartographers' mapping the terrain of our 'social reality'. We need to constantly improve the precision and accuracy of our 'charts', by sending out 'noetic explorers'. Our ultimate aim is that our maps become convergent with 'reality', with TROONATNOOR. Our map-makers will need specialized training. They will require resources. They will need to be extremely courageous. They will need to be tough and committed. Their mission will be thwart with challenges and dangers. They will need to belong to that special breed of adventurers and pioneers known as 'philosophers'.

Education can no longer revolve around merely answering given questions, it must revolve equally around learning how to formulate questions, to determine which questions are important, which questions are potentially productive or valid, and which arguments, and forms of argument, are compelling.

An optimal distribution of executive power is one that allows the most holistically enlightened and innovative actors and institutions to employ power in the interests of everyone and everything. An optimal framework for the distribution of power is one which provides for fluidity of decision making. It must prevent power from becoming an institution in and of itself. The only form of power should be the power of compelling arguments. Such a system of relations and definitions would preclude power from becoming an asset in itself, to be exchanged, bought and sold, like any other good or service, as political power currently is.

Advertising should be allowed to inform, but not to abuse

Advertising should be limited to providing information that is factual, or at least informative. A form of Choice Magazine should test every product as it enters the market, to inform consumers. Rationalization towards innovative monopolies should take place gradually. Pro-active marketing, in which producers inform consumers about what is possible, and consumers feed-back information about what they value most in products, would drive production. Producers would have no way of manipulating consumers into buying junk products. Transparency regarding the costs and benefits of any product, and their distribution, would allow consumers to make informed choices.

Advertising should be limited to providing factual information and scientifically validated facts about products and services. Advertisers should inform people about the availability of goods and services, and about what value they can really offer. Goods and services should then essentially sell themselves. People either need the product, or they don't. People will either want the product due to the real value it provides, the real benefits it can offer, or not.

Packaging, jingles, slogans, and meaningless product endorsements by celebrities in no position to evaluate the value or efficacy of a product, add nothing to the value of products. Ads should be called ads only if they actually add information to the decision making process of consumers. Advertisers should not be allowed to use cunning tricks to manipulate people into buying products they don't need or which provide little or no real value.

Advertising must be sober and informative, and not be allowed to subtly imply anything that is not a demonstrable benefit of the product or service. Clever advertising should be limited to promoting things that are in the public good, like wearing seat-belts, driving safely, giving up smoking, eating more healthily, exercising more, and so on.

Of course this would mean that many products would not be produced. These are products that provide no real value to consumers or the society in general. Without clever and manipulative advertising campaigns many products would be of little interest to consumers. Few people would ever have considered consuming tobacco products without the influence of advertising. Fewer people would consume Coca-Cola or any other brand name junk food, if it were not so aggressively and ubiquitously marketed.

This would represent a net increase in actual value production within a society. Resources that would otherwise have been wasted on products of no real value could be employed in generating real value for all members of society. Resources not spent on tobacco and the health costs it produces, could be spent on education and public transport, or on better community facilities, or on fresh fruit and vegetables, or on 'elective' surgery, and free dental care.

Advertisers would be limited to presenting typical results. At present they are allowed to selectively present only the positive results, and parade them as if they were representative. At present they are only forced to add the barely legibly words 'results shown not typical, individual results may vary'.

Everyone making any claims about anything, including religions, systems of relations, or political policies, must be compelled to show the 'typical' results, rather than the 'exceptions'. The 'mode' must become the standard statistic, as it represents the most 'typical' result, rather than the 'average', which is often far from 'typical'.

Accessing cues

Most of what parades under the rubric of Neuro Linguistic Programming is 'bunk', junk, or rubbish. However some of the elements adopted by NLP are potentially valuable tools. Bandler and Grinder studied eye movements. They discovered some interesting correlations which they termed 'accessing cues'.

These can help provide insights into a person's mental processes. For a normally organized right handed person, the direction their eyes point while they are thinking can indicate what they are thinking about, and whether they are more likely to be lying or being truthful.

If they look to the top right they are constructing a visual.

If they look level right, they are constructing a sound.

If they look to the bottom right they are re-constructing a kinesthetic impression, recalling a feeling.

If they are looking to the top left they are reconstructing a visual impression, recalling an image.

When they look level to the left, they are recalling a sound.

If they are looking to the bottom left they are engaging in an internal dialog with themselves.

For 'recall' you can imply 'telling the truth'. For 'construct' you can imply dissembling or deceiving.

Selection effect

Let us briefly consider the meaning of the term 'selection effect', as it is key to specious sophistry. If your aim is to 'win' an argument, then you are only going to present data and arguments that support your own contentions or arguments. You are not going to present data that contradicts your own arguments. A defense lawyer may not present information or evidence that might lead to their client being, rightfully, convicted of a crime. In our culture, it is conventional to present only that data which aids our 'case'.

Remember that how compelling an argument becomes to us is as much a question of what isn't presented, as it is about what is presented. And of course we rarely discover what it is that wasn't presented. This requires the hard, thankless, depressing, isolating, debilitating, financially and emotionally ruinous work of the interrogator and whistleblower.

Much of the time no-one wants to know the truth. The truth is often inconvenient to too many people.

We are often provided with a carefully 'selected' selection of arguments, data, correlations, and so on. These are presented, implicitly, as if they were in fact representative examples of the whole universe of examples. In fact they may be rare anomalies, rare and unrepresentative cases. They may be exceptions to the general rule.

When television shows present the positive 'hits' of the 'psychic', it is easy to be misled into accepting the skills of the psychic as real. We are only presented with the psychics apparent successes. It is only when we are made aware that these 'hits' are the exceptions, among a majority of 'misses', that we realize how we have been tricked. Once we are aware that the 'psychic' fails most of the time to provide any useful information, or even information that could possibly be interpreted as pointing towards the solution to some mystery or crime, we see how we have been conned.

We are presented with the 'hits' of Nostradamus's predictions, and those which can be conveniently distorted to correlate to historical events. The fact is that he made huge numbers of predictions that cannot be verified, or which were patently wrong. Only those people who are aware of his full body of work will be aware of this 'selection effect' in the books and 'documentaries' on Nostradamus and his 'amazing' gift for 'prophecy'.

If you are selling something, you focus on the positive consequences of using your product. This is obvious selection.

Remember that when we say something is not scientific, what we mean is that no-one can say why or even how a particular product works at relieving symptoms. Without this certain understanding of the effects of chemicals and so on the human organism, it is inevitable that patients eventually experience unintended and negative 'side-effects'. Of course often the drug companies have invested so much in their products that they prefer to settle court cases for the foreseen misery their products will produce, rather than remove their products from the market.

Holistic reasoning requires the presentation, or the discovery, of all the information regarding an issue. It requires that we be suspicious of selectivity on the part of those presenting arguments. This selectivity is often deliberate and conscious, in the case of lawyers, lobbyists, and advertising people. It is just as often unconscious, and accidental, due to ignorance and naivety. In the one case we can anticipate hostility to our interrogations. On the other, we can anticipate little better, as people don't like being 'shown up' to be ignorant or naive. They prefer to take things 'on faith'. Few people are willing to have intellectual rigor and transparency demanded of them, let alone imposed on them.

Dogs can be trained to detect cancer, but they are not psychic

Dogs can 'smell' the formaldehydes given off by cancer growths. They can also 'hear' or feel vibrations through their foot-pads. Their sense of smell is thousands of times more powerful than humans, but they perceive only a few colors. However stories of 'psychic' dogs are an example of selectivity or non-reporting bias. In this case the bias is not deliberate. It is merely a result of selective perception. If every time you come home your dog is waiting for you at the door, excited, as if it was expecting you, you could be forgiven for believing that it is psychic. Sure, you see the dog there every time you come home.

The impression gained of the dog having psychic powers arises from what you don't see. What you don't know is that the dog reacts that way hundreds of times a day, whenever it hears anything near the house. In fact the dog rushes excitedly to the door whenever anyone comes past, or it hears any car pull up. Of course when you do, it will respond to that noise too.

It is you who actively constructs the definition of this behavior as being exclusively in response to your arrival. We do tend to think that the world revolves around us, don't we! The myth of psychic dogs was revealed by researchers placing cameras in the house of a dog owner, thus recording the dog's behavior over the day. The cameras revealed the misses. The dog owner was only aware, only able to experience, the hits. It is from such 'hits' that we construct all forms of 'psychic' phenomena.

The ability to miss things

Some supermarket chains offer discounts on particular items to those with loyalty or 'partner-cards'. I am very careful about all my purchases. Several times in the past I had failed to notice the 'partner card only' sign above discounted products. After checking my receipt and noticing I had been charged the normal price, and having to return some things as a result, I discovered how the system worked. So I really paid great attention to whether discounts were general, or only for card holders.

However no matter how careful I was to look for such warning signs, I still managed to miss. On a few occasions the notices had not been put up, and supermarket staff had quickly put the signs up. However at least twice I managed to totally miss signs that were clearly posted next to the product. So I have no trouble accepting that we can easily miss things that are right in front of us.

We must always remain open-minded to such flaws in our perception of reality. Most of us are wise to the fact that we tend not to notice things that are of no interest to us. Most of us have experienced suddenly noting how many people drive the same car as us, after we have bought one. Before this we had not noticed. However even when we are making a definite effort to observe things, we can still miss them.

Paradigms, selectivity bias, and denial

It is common for doctors and whole societies to deny reality to 'accommodate' their own theories and conventions. People operating within any particular system of defining, any 'paradigm', are often so focused on their own model that they fail to listen to reality even as it screams in their faces. In hindsight it is easy to criticize them for failing to see what is obvious, what was staring them in the face. They were looking through the glasses of their ways of defining things, their paradigms, and were acting as if their paradigm was reality. You don't notice the beauty around you, or the violence, if you are not looking for it, if you are not actually 'there', in reality, but in your inherited and constructed 'social reality'.

Their paradigms told them what was real, what to pay attention to, what to look for, what meaning to assign things, what was significant and what was irrelevant, as reflexive of the paradigms definitions. All meanings are reflexive. The meaning you ascribe something will be reflexive of all of your other meanings. You can't expect to simply observe reality. Your observations will be selective, and then the meanings you ascribe will be selective.

The observer-constructor of reality may be unaware of the impact of their paradigms. Most people have inherited and internalised them as taken for granted, self-evident realities. They aren't aware they are wearing glasses at all, therefore they never take them off to check them for distortion and so on.

Further, the dominant hegemonic interests will compel, coerce, or co-opt scientists into selectively presenting and omitting compelling arguments and definitions that are not compatible with, and may therefore threaten, the hegemonic definitions, the dominant paradigm, the 'social reality, that provides them with their hegemonic power and privileges.

Conspiracies to mystify, distort, and deny reality will emerge out of direct, conscious collusion, and non-consciously and indirectly out of a mere co-incidence of interests.

Copernicus was coerced into denying his compelling scientific observations that the world revolved around the sun. Later Galileo was forced by the Inquisition in 1633 by threat of torture and death, to do the same. The bible was the most compelling source of transferred authority and power for the church, feudal state, aristocracy, and other beneficiaries of the dominant hegemonic order. The bible's authority rested on it being the literal and compelling word of god. The bible stated clearly that the sun revolved around the earth, among other things. Copernicus's compelling scientific observations and arguments demonstrated that the earth revolved around the sun, that the bible was perhaps not be the word of god, and not infallible.

If the dominant hegemonic interests lost most of their transferred authority, they would then have to earn their authority like anyone else. The dominant hegemonic interests don't like having to 'earn' anything. They break into a sweat at the slightest hint of true 'meritocracy'. They know their true value. They know what they are worth. They know they could never 'earn' the privileges and benefits they enjoy.

The church and aristocracy, of course, would not accept this without a fight. They had more privileges and power than anyone, and they used this power to coerce Copernicus into renouncing his scientific discovery. They threatened him with torture and death. He was forced to renounce his own discoveries, rather than suffer the fate of whistleblowers throughout history.

Under some systems they were sent to the gulag, the KZ (concentration camps of the SS), tortured, or just murdered. Under the present systems we live under, whistleblowers are simply defined as mentally ill and 'blacklisted'. They will never be employed by any government organization. It is the government organizations, after all, who are the most corrupt and have the most to hide. They don't want to lose their unearned, undeserved privileges.

Not only are scientists limited by the paradigms in which they operate, they are also often prevented from publishing the results of their work. The opposite also applies. A lot of work is published that is either of no value, or even misleading. Scientists and researchers must publish to get research grants from the state and from private institutions. They are therefore often compelled to 'produce' something to publish.

Research papers on artificial sweeteners and even cholesterol were often published well before any compelling findings were made, resulting in the ban on artificial sweeteners in many countries, and their placement in the U.S on the FDA list of toxic substances. A whole industry has emerged to fight cholesterol, when in fact the latest compelling long term research indicates that it is of no real danger. The scientists had to publish something, and quick.

By the time really rigorous long term studies were carried out the original research had become more or less 'hegemonic'. People had 'Internalized' the *mis*-information. You can still find lots of people today who will tell you that artificial sweeteners are 'poison'. In fact when I was in South Korea I discovered, to my dismay, that it was still officially banned by the government, and I couldn't buy it anywhere I looked.

This leads us to the reality of 'sponsored' research. Researchers get grants from private institutions for publishing research that suits their sponsors' interests. If their results don't benefit their sponsors, they cut funding. Further, many researchers are directly employed by companies, own stock in them, and sit on their boards of directors. Some own their own companies. They need to 'produce' demand for their products, to market products, to make money for their employers and themselves. They obviously have a vested interest in 'proving' that high cholesterol is damaging if they market pharmaceuticals and drugs which can lower cholesterol. They obviously have a vested interest in demonstrating that tobacco products are harmless, if they market tobacco products. The Scientists who did the original studies into the effects of tobacco consumption never published their results. They withheld the results. The companies that paid for the research had no interest in demonstrating how damaging their products were to their consumers, and 'passive' smokers.

If you work for the Administration, or hope to be rewarded by their real bosses, big business, then you will have to define anyone who threatens to incriminate them as crazy. The psychiatrists who work for the government won't get promoted if they don't define the right people as crazy. Most of them do what they are told. If necessary they manage to convince themselves they haven't in fact done anything wrong at all. The ones who don't do their masters bidding lose their jobs. No-one will hire someone who previously failed to do their employers bidding. Doing the right thing is a real career-limiting-move. Publicly reporting on your employer is a career killer. Sometimes it is a real killer.

You can see that there are many reasons why reality does not get publicly recognized until it becomes so persistent and stubborn that the current paradigms, the hegemonic social reality, has to be changed. Reality eventually has its day. The court of reality can be convened, but it will enforce its verdict sooner or later. It is usually when the dominant hegemonic order is in crisis, at the point of dis-integration, that this 'rude awakening' occurs. The dominant hegemonic paradigms can only 'integrate' so much of the primary reality into their own constructed 'social reality' before they 'burst'.

The concept psycho-somatic is itself a product of a particular paradigm in which the mind is considered separate from the body, even spiritual. When we see that the mind is physical, that it is part of the whole, that it cannot be distinguished from the body, then we cannot use a term like psycho-somatic. What we must do is recognize that all forms of violence that are experienced must be expressed or processed.

This is why emotional disturbances are felt bodily, and are often expressed with 'physical' symptoms, as well as emotional or behavioral ones. Remember that the concepts emotional, physical, and behavioral are used invalidly within conventional paradigms. Our usages of them are symptomatic of our 'social reality', our dominant or hegemonic paradigms or models, and their problematic ways of defining and relating. Ways of conceptualizing which include the concept 'psycho-somatic' are artifacts of the dominant hegemonic social constructs/paradigms/models/realities.

As enlightened beings, operating outside the social constructs, we can see that the distinctions between emotional, physical, and behavioral are merely convenient ways of referring to different dimensions of the same whole. The terms must be used with caution. We experience through our whole being. We respond to and express that experience through processes we call emotions and reason. A physical symptom is as much a 'behavior' of our whole system as is an emotional outburst, or less subtle 'physical' action. The more you are in touch with your authentic emotions and responses, the clearer this reality will become to you.

What goes in must come out. When we recognize all the forms of violence in our society, we will be able to make our society a truly less violent one. Remember that when you commit violence, you may seem to have gotten off free, but in reality you will judge yourself, your own body will punish you. What goes out must be expressed from within also. It works both ways. The next time you are sick, ask yourself what the real reason might be.

Constructing prophecy and expert authority from insider knowledge

The priest often secured their position as expert with secret knowledge through their scientific knowledge. If they could accurately predict a solar eclipse, then they could present the phenomena in a mystical light. They could demonstrate their mystical powers and knowledge by accurately predicting the mystical (in reality astronomic) event. If Moses was aware that the Dead Sea levels had fallen, he could interpret the event for his followers as a miracle, and proof of his high connections with god. It would provide him with authority and credibility as the representative of god. He could use this authority for his own purposes.

Moses could claim responsibility for a plague of frogs, the death of the king's son, or any other natural phenomenon, retrospectively revising history to suit his purposes. If he could predict the events in advance, say the child was sickly, then he could present the *fait accompli* as an act of his god, by threatening that god would punish the pharaoh by killing his child. When the inevitable happened, he could use it as proof of the power of his god, and his power as that god's representative. He had effectively turned his insider knowledge into authority and privilege. Today scientists have the real insider knowledge.

Books such as the Bible are supreme examples of retrospective revisionism. The editors and authors of the bible can predict outcomes which the editors and authors already know about, because they have already happened. You say people aren't that easily fooled? You just juggle the dates and make it look as if the document you are writing now was actually written well in the past, before the events it predicts or prophecies, had taken place. You will therefore imbue your ancient texts, with the power of prophecy.

Write a book today, about what happened last week. Pretend the book had been written last century. Voila! You have a book of prophecies. In your book you also make other predictions for next year. Everyone reads your book, and is stunned at the accuracy of its predictions concerning last week. They will be enthralled with its predictions for next year. Surely it has proven itself capable of prophesying the future. None can challenge or question that it accurately predicted what would (did) happen last week. It now has the authority of prophecy. The author was a true prophet. We can have faith that what the prophet and the prophecies predict for next year will also come to pass! I'm sure you could think of ways to benefit from that situation.

The important thing to remember about bible prophecies is that they are 'interpreted' after events, and not before. We are then told that the biblical statements we are presented with actually predict these events. If the bible did predict anything, then its readers would be able to predict events before they happened. Anyone can predict things in hindsight. It is easy to stretch and distort cryptic statements to fit events, after the event.

If we are talking about a book of prophecy, say written by Nostradamus, then the real trick is to only present the prophecies that can be retrospectively assigned to events. If you only reveal the apparent hits, you can give the impression that Nostradamus really could predict the future. It is only after you recognize that the few apparent hits exist within a huge population of misses, that you can discount the apparent hits'. Your interrogations of the situation will then reveal that those 'hits' are merely 'ascribed' retrospectively to give the false impression of 'prediction'. Once again it is more what you don't reveal, what you don't say, than what you do. This is why your oath in court is the truth, the whole truth.

Ideally witnesses would be compelled by law to pro-actively supply information, rather than being merely compelled to answer questions put to them. It is often the questions that weren't asked that were the important ones, and which might have allowed some modicum of real 'justice' to prevail. We currently charge people who give false testimony with criminal offenses. We should also charge people for not telling us things they knew, and which a reasonable person would have realized would have had bearing on the judge's or jury's decisions. It should be an

offense not to come forward and provide information that could reasonably be expected to have some bearing on the trial process.

Selectivity bias, priming, spin doctoring, and specious sophistry

The most telling part of ads for these motivational programs are the small print that appears, barely legibly, at the bottom of the television screen. 'Results shown are not typical'. It is in fact only the exceptions that are presented, the people who succeeded, and attributed that success to the marketed program. This is of course a bias of selectivity. Only the positive stories are presented. If you are allowed to select which results to present, then you can claim almost anything for anything.

We see a man standing on a racing track and a car speeding towards him. He's talking about 'tires you can trust', that is, security. We see the car speed towards him. We see him talking. We see the driver hitting the brakes. We see the car pull up and stop exactly at the man's legs. We automatically put two and two together. The car managed to just pull up in time. A sense of relief washes over us. We have a particular brand of tires to trust for our delivery from the threat. We too can put our trust in 'brand X' tires.

Of course in reality film footage had been played backwards. The car had reversed from the man. And then footage of the car braking had been spliced in at the appropriate point, the point at which we would naturally assume, given all of this editing, that the car had just managed to stop. The effectiveness of teleology and specious sophistry is to set up expectations, and to distract us from 'the trick'. This commercial is a good analogy for all the sorts of 'card-trick' type 'spiels' we can be fooled by, if we are not careful. This is why people try to make you take quick decisions, and commit yourself before you've had a chance to check out 'all the angles', and interrogate the situation.

Hancock opportunistically looks for any loose correlations he can find between pyramids in Egypt or temples near Angkor Watt, and stars in Orion's belt and the dragon constellation. He then makes up a satisfying 'narrative', in the post-modern sense, that 'unites' the two in a 'meaningful' and 'significant' way. He does this via a web of specious sophistry and pure showmanship. The correlations are far from precise. They wouldn't lead anyone, left to their own devices, to any conclusions. However where the audience has been immersed in the 'spiel', and are in frantic anticipation of supernatural or incredible revelations, they will accept the vague arguments as the 'amazing' and 'erie' proofs of Atlantis that they have been offered up as.

The pyramids are over 9 degrees out of alignment with the stars they are supposed to 'mirror'. He actually argues that his loose correlations demonstrate the existence of the mythical 'Atlantis'. Atlantis is said to have been a superior civilization that disappeared off the face of the earth. He claims that the pyramids and the Angkor Watt temple complexes were built by descendants of Atlantis, with superior technology that they had brought with them, from Atlantis. This 'explains' the 'uncanny' correlations Hancock has 'discovered'.

The three pyramids that he selects arbitrarily from a larger group of pyramids at Giza vaguely 'mirror' the 'Belt of Orion', a pattern of stars in the Orion constellation. He presents the correlations as if they scream out to be noticed. In fact he merely chose that group of stars, and that group of pyramids, simply because they lend themselves to his purposes. If you picked any three landmarks arbitrarily from a group of landmarks anywhere in the world, you would be able to find some similar correlation with some small group of stars among the billions in the sky. However the trick is that you present the process the opposite way around.

The mystification of the correlation is that you present your data in a way that misleads. You pretend that it was the correlations that caught your attention. You don't tell your audience that you systematically looked for any correlations you could construct some specious 'meaning' from. When you present the 'evidence', your audience merely see an astonishing correlation. You don't tell them that you deliberately ignored all the other correlations that contradicted your theory. This is the true art of bias, and mystification. People can challenge what you do tell

them, but they won't even consider what you don't tell them. You can conjure significance and meaning from loose, meaningless, insignificant correlations.

There are so many stars, so many constellations, and so many landmarks, that if you look for similarities, and are willing to accept even vague ones as significant, then you will be able to 'find' (construct) pretty much as many as you want. The trick is also in the story in which you 'embed' the 'evidence'. In the same way that you prepare a victim of your card trick with a distracting pre-amble, and actually do the trick while they are distracted, you prepare your audience for the specious sophistry by setting the whole thing up with a good leading story. This is known as 'priming'.

You lead them to anticipate something, to eagerly await a significant and meaningful revelation. They are then willing to accept the nonsense that you feed them, and are prepared to be suitably overwhelmed by the 'compelling' (specious) argument (sophistry) that you present them with. Confidence tricksters and con artists have always used the same tricks. A sort of mass hypnosis results, where people are 'prepared' to be duped.

If you spend a decade 'preparing' your audience for a moon landing, show them a real rocket launch, then show them studio produced 'footage' of the astronauts 'landing on the moon', and then real footage of them emerging from a space capsule, they will have no reason to doubt that they just witnessed a moon landing.

The 'footage' was real, they will be immersed in the story, they will be expecting a moon landing, and when they are shown one, this anticipation will be satisfied. There would be no reason for them to even consider doubting that the U.S landed men on the moon. Why would anyone bother looking closely at the facts, and at the 'footage'? What reason would they have to do so?

It is only when someone for some reason bothered to take a closer look at the putative moon landing footage, that it became clear that the footage could not have been taken on the moon. It was an undeniable and compellingly clear reality. NASA did not have to admit it for a long time.

When they could not deny it, they merely 'changed the definition' of what it 'meant'. They argued, by letting others 'leak' the information, that they were concerned that the footage that they in fact did make of the actual moon landing would not meet the audiences expectations, and so they had prepared footage in a film studio, in advance, in case the actual footage was not usable. Remember this is the ploy of those who cannot deny reality, to change the meaning of that reality. It is called 'spin doctoring'.

To avoid suspicions that you are feeding them a line, that you are trying to trick them once more, you will allow the 'information' to be 'leaked', to be 'uncovered', as a sensational investigative report. This will give it greater credibility. It will have the 'transferred authority' of investigative journalism and an 'inside scoop'. You didn't want them to know, but they found out. They might not trust you if you just gave them the information. They would be suspicious of your motives. They might start to thinking. They might work out what you were doing.

NASA used the media as an instrument for reflexively giving their lie the appearance of a reality that they themselves had wished to cover up. They didn't want us to know! But we caught them out! We will be so pleased with ourselves. We will pat ourselves on the back for having revealed the truth. We will be so pleased with ourselves that we won't interrogate the situation any further. We are satisfied that we have the full truth, finally. Brilliant, you have to admit. They can't get one past us!

I myself had come to anticipate such a course of action well before they 'leaked' their 'damage control' story. After being convinced that the moon landing footage was not authentic, and that the scientific evidence indicated that it would have been impossible for NASA to have put men on the moon, I wondered how this compelling reality could be 'managed'. How would the spin doctors manage the situation? I myself considered that they would 're-define' the reality of the footage, and claim that they had actually landed on the moon, but had filmed the footage on earth, for technical reasons.

A year later I saw my 'plan' realized, in the most cunning of ways. The presenter who introduced the documentary idiotically missed the point, and claimed that the documentary itself was a 'spoof'. He was 'embedded' in the whole story. He had accepted that NASA had landed men on the moon, and saw no reason to doubt the

footage should be anything other than authentic. However the documentary proceeded along the lines that I would have adopted if I were NASA.

The documentary claimed that the director of '2001 a Space Odyssey', Stanley Kubrick, had filmed the 'landing' himself, with a few technical assistants. They even had members of NASA 'admitting' that they had been 'caught out'. By making this appear embarrassing, or that they wished to 'cover it up', they distracted the Public's attention, focusing it on the 'cover up' of the falsified landing footage. By doing so, they distracted interrogation away from the moon landing itself, which was treated as a taken for granted reality, and brought it to bear selectively where they wanted it, where it couldn't 'reveal' much, where there was nothing to see, where it could do little harm.

It is like the card trickster who keeps your attention focused on the later part of the card trick, after it has already been set up. No matter how clever you are at dis-assembling the card trick, you won't be able to, as you are working on the wrong end of the trick. You will be so busy you won't look back earlier into the 'spiel' where the real trick was actually performed.

They are 'forced' to 'begrudgingly' admit that the footage had been prepared in a studio on earth. Everyone is satisfied. The problems with the footage are explained away in the context of 'fake' footage. We aren't for a second in doubt about the 'actual' landing. We have 'caught those smart guys out'. We are satisfied with ourselves. We are satisfied, and don't interrogate any further.

They couldn't deny that the footage was a fake, so they just re-defined the meaning of the fake footage. If they had failed to do so, then the obvious conclusion would have been that the footage was faked because the landing never took place.

When a probe is sent to take pictures of the landing site, and can't find one, they will surely find explanations for this other than the obvious one that the moon landing was in fact a hoax.

Why did they lie? The U.S Administration had invested huge amounts of tax dollars in a mission that had captured the imagination of the public. The Russians were well ahead of the Americans in 'the space race'. It would have been a public relations nightmare if the Russians could even nominally demonstrate the superiority of communism over capitalism by winning 'the space race'. A lot was at stake.

Realising that their mission was technically impossible, but that the Russians had clocked up success after success, the U.S administration simply worked with NASA to trick the public, to pretend they had sent men to the moon. The Russians would then give up their space ambitions. The Russians knew they couldn't land anyone on the moon. They never tried. They apparently never had the idea to fake one either. No-one has bothered to be the 'second' nation to land on the moon. No-one has tried to land on the moon since. And all the telescopes on earth and in space combined have yet produced a single image of the landing site.

No-one has ever landed on the moon. Today NASA still can't reliably bring a space shuttle back from its earth orbit, and this is decades after NASA convinced the world that they managed to land on the moon, walk around on it, drive around on it, and then return safely to earth.

The scam had saved the American administration face, and had 'demonstrated' the superiority of capitalism over communism. This public relations coup had validated the 'American way of life'. A new era of confidence emerged in America. America could do anything. It was a huge propaganda victory in the cold war. Hollywood had proven its superiority over the U.S.S.R. Stanley Kubrick had been the first to land a man on the moon!

If you 'look' for mysterious correlations, and are prepared to be really intellectually non rigorous, then you can, and will, find them anywhere and everywhere. What a magical world we live in, if you want to believe. Hancock's readers are willing co-conspirators in the construction of meaning, in much the same way that smokers, tobacco producers, and advertisers all willingly co-conspire in their construction of smoking as a harmless, yet sexy and satisfying lifestyle 'choice'.

Science demonstrated that the 'Atlantis' that the author had chosen as his 'sunken city', was in fact no more than a natural coastal formation. He then had to back-pedal and change the meaning or significance of his earlier claims for this natural feature. He had previously based his whole theory on this coastal formation being the lost city

of Atlantis. Once he couldn't deny that it wasn't what he said it was, he simply changed the meaning of this fact. It was 'no longer necessary' to his theory.' Rather than be forced to abandon his theory, he merely changed the 'significance' of the facts. This is pure 'spin'.

So Hancock's fantastical story had been 'sunken', like his mythical Atlantis. The only question left is whether he was genuine at all, whether he had ever really believed his theory himself, or whether it was populist nonsense, disingenuous specious sophistry designed to tap into and profit from the populist desire for meaning, significance, and mystery. He sold over 7 million books and got his own television series. Fame and fortune can be yours if you have no scruples of exploiting populist nonsense. Ask talkback radio stars! Ask the priests!

Ultimately people will believe what they want to believe. We can't blame the seducer alone. Seduction requires the willing co-operation of the seduced. Even after all arguments and logic I can present here, many people will believe things that are actually damaging to their real interests, simply because these beliefs meet their needs for meaning and security.

Dan Brown claims that the term 'holy grail' was originally written as 'sang real', or 'royal blood', which he takes to mean the blood-line of Christ. In fact the term 'sang real' is a *mis*-transcription by a monk. There is absolutely no evidence anywhere to support the claim that a particular Sara, meaning princess, and interpreted to be the child of Jesus and Mary, sailed to France from Palestine in the fourth or fifth century. The whole myth is based upon one monk's *mis*-transcription of the original texts.

Dan Brown misleads people by failing to include important information which essentially discounts all his so-called 'mysteries', and proves them to be hoaxes, fakes, and cons. The Priory of Sion was in fact founded in 1956. Its 3 members made up a 'secret' dossier to teleologically give their 'secret society' some synthetic authenticity.

When people manage to 'discover' this 'secret' dossier, the Priory of Zion appears real and mysterious. It takes on the 'transferred authority' of a mystery that the members had wanted to keep secret. Secrets fascinate us. This was the intention.

The Priory was originally set up by 3 friends, so that one of them, Plantard, could claim to be a descendant of, and rightful heir to, the French throne. It was named after Mt. Sion. They claimed to have a history dating back to 1099, as a secret organization with the Knights Templar as its military arm, and a 'blood-line' tracing back to Christ through the Merovingian kings of France. They included, among many other notable figures in history, Leonardo Da Vinci, as a putative member. Plantard set himself up through this fictitious 'blood-line' as a descendant of Jesus, through the Merovingian kings. However he himself admitted that the whole scam was a fraud.

The story of the priest who suddenly became wealthy can be easily explained, if you want to. No secret Templar treasure had ever been found. The priest built his chateau from the sale of indulgences, selling rich people forgiveness for their sins, so they wouldn't have to spend time in purgatory, where 'fires' purged sinners until they were clean enough to enter heaven.

There was a flourishing and extremely lucrative market for 'indulgences' at that time. We should remember that the church also sold 'offices' within the Catholic Church. If you wanted your son to have a position of power within the church then you were expected to be quite generous. The Knights Templar also accumulated a fortune as the world's first international bankers.

Dan Brown would not be interviewed about these facts. He merely claimed merely that the places, rituals and so on in his book are all real. What he fails to say is that all the myths that the story relies on have been proven to be frauds and cons, that is, fictions. He would not let anyone interview him.

He argues that the effeminate male in Da Vinci's last supper is Mary Magdalene, and not St. John, even though Da Vinci had a history of portraying males in effeminate forms. In fact the Mona Lisa may be a self-portrait. Claims that an M and V could be made from the background behind Jesus and St. John are also speculative, or mere specious sophistry. There is nothing compelling about the argument. Dan Brown had argued that the M was for Mary Magdalene, and the V symbolized a womb, that is, pregnancy. The truth is that you could find many letters

and give them many different interpretations if you wanted to. Assigning one set of lines a particular meaning is purely arbitrary, and in Browns case, self-serving.

In fact the original 'holy grail' from which Jesus supposedly drank at the last supper was invented around 1000AD in a work of fiction. Up until then no mention had ever been made to any grail. This work of fiction, however, became a popular theme in later works of fiction. The original work was then given a teleological authority. Later works refer to the original (fictional) reference as a source. They are justifying their fictions via reference to someone else's fictions. It is typical teleological argument, using one assumption to synthetically prove another. It reminds me of the 'Reformed epistemology' of Thomas Aquinas.

Later in the 1980s the theory emerged that references to the Holy Grail were actually to the blood-line of Jesus and David. They didn't care for the fact that the original references to a holy grail itself were mere fictions. Fiction writers claim that the Cathars claimed that Jesus was a man, and not the son of god. This was presented as the supposed heresy of the Cathars. A few Cathars had escaped from their last stronghold, Mt. Segur, in Languedoc in the French Pyrenees.

They supposedly took secret documents with them regarding the bloodline of Jesus. This is pure fiction also. In fact no evidence exists of any such Cathar heresy, or even that the Cathars had ever been secretive at all. It had been claimed by fiction writers that the Cathars claimed that Satan had created the world, which accounted for the evil in it. There is no evidence that the Cathars made any such claims. There is absolutely no evidence at all that the Cathars were heretical at all. There was nothing heretical about their beliefs.

The knights Templar had been set up as 'Hospitalers', that is, to provide hospitality and protection for travelers to holy land. They were based in the holiest church in

Christendom, the Temple in Jerusalem. They amassed amazing wealth and power. Much of their wealth came in the form of donations to the holiest church in Christendom, which they were the protectors of. However they had a much more lucrative and secure form of wealth production. They more or less operated the first international banking system. Instead of carrying gold, which could easily be stolen across hostile lands, traders could buy promissory notes from the Templars in one land, and then convert them to gold in the land where they needed the funds. There is no need to believe that the Templars found any treasure from King David's time, let alone any evidence of this.

The King of France and the Catholic Church destroyed the Cathars simply because they had become too wealthy and powerful. King Philip IV, and the Catholic Church, were merely greedy for the Templars wealth. We should be reminded that the church and the state shared in the wealth of heretics and heretical orders when they disbanded them. In England the King 'appropriated' the wealth of the Catholic 'orders' and sold the lands of the disbanded Catholic abbeys to his followers, at a good price, pocketing the receipts for himself. In this way his loyal supporters were rewarded with cheap land, and he could replenish his own empty royal coffers. It was lucrative business to 'find' heresy or witches.

According to the myth of Roselyn chapel, and a scroll carbon dated to the 15th century, with a +or - 700 year margin of error, the Roselyn chapel was meant to have been built to house the grail and the Ark of the Covenant. When they excavated in the temple, they found nothing but rubble. Some claimed that the Templars had visited the chapel, but this would have been impossible as it had not been built until 150 years after the destruction of the Templar orders. A coat of arms on the supposed 15th Century scroll are in fact from the middle of the 18th century.

They did not belong on a 15th century document. Cryptic symbols on the scroll are supposed to represent the chapel, and the 12 tribes of Israel are supposedly represented by 12 tents. There are in fact no Templar connections, or coded symbols for a grail and the ark of covenant, on the scroll. There is no connection between the Templars and Roslyn chapel in Scotland.

Dan Brown's card trick is set up before the reader starts paying attention. The reader simply assumes that the story of 'The holy grail' is in fact historical, or at least a real legend. He then employs selective bias by only informing

his readers of things that suit his purposes, that is, to set up a mystery. However there is in fact no mystery. The rest of his strategy is less subtle. He simply misrepresents things and lies. The burial container of James, the brother of Jesus, and Solomon's tablet, have been proven to be fakes. There in fact exists absolutely no archaeological evidence of Jesus or of King Solomon. The current Wailing Wall in Jerusalem is only 1000 years old. It does not date back to biblical times. However I am glad he wrote the book, as it will be the first time that most people realize that all the stories of Jesus and so on are really recycled pagan myths.

Some more original spin

In order to reconcile what later founders of the Christ-myth cult needed from Jesus, and his followers, with his follower's actual betrayal and denial, and the God-man's death, they had to revise events, and redefine their meaning. The Jewish priesthood reconciled, subjectively, through specious sophistry, the Jews being both the chosen people and a subjugated and enslaved people. The founders of the Christ-cult that became the Catholic Church followed this tradition. They had to redefine failures and suffering as virtues. Jesus, the son of god, should have been able to save himself. He hadn't. His followers should have had faith in him, especially after all the miracles later ascribed to him, but they didn't. This would imply the miracles never took place at all. The betrayal, denial, and death of Jesus were historical facts which they had to deal with.

The facts couldn't be changed. So the facts were merely reconciled, by ascribing particular meanings to them which would change the meaning and therefore, subjectively, the very nature of the events that took place, for those who wished to believe it, and subscribe to the dogma surrounding Jesus. Jesus had to die, according to this 'reconciliation', to fulfill the Jewish prophet's prophecies. To add substance to this claim, the gospel writers have Jesus make the statement about rebuilding the temple in three days. The gospel writers couldn't compare notes. Jesus should have been ascribed as referring to 2 days and one night, to make the resurrection stories reflect this ascribed prophecy. Jesus has to predict that he will be betrayed and denied, and will die on the cross.

All of this had in fact happened. In order to reconcile these realities with Jesus' deity, he is not dying because he is not in fact the son of god and therefore unable to call on God's help or his own powers. No. He is dying because he is the son of god, and it is god's plan for the perfect Jesus to die for our sins and give us everlasting life. All-powerful god couldn't think of any alternatives. It was apparently unacceptable just to choose himself to be generous and let us off the hook for the condition he himself is responsible for producing. Surely god is omnipotent? Or does he observe some more fundamental laws, or perhaps some 'master' god?

So we are all sinners, only saved by the grace of god, and Jesus' sacrifice. And he is actually the father son and Holy Ghost in one. The disciples did god's will by betraying and denying their hero, and in doing so fulfilled the prophecies proving Jesus was the son of god. Nice work, that, you have to admit. Pure specious sophistry and teleological argument but as a work of art it is admirable. Of course it was all swallowed greedily by people wanting it all to be true. Or at least wanting to avoid the fates worse than death that the church inflicted on anyone who expressed any doubts or skepticism, or even asked too many questions.

The failures of the followers of Jesus, in keeping with Jewish tradition, are revised into virtues. Everything has its purpose in god's world, and it is sheer arrogance of us to demand of the priests to explain everything. God works in mysterious ways. The priests can't explain god's mysteries, but they know for sure that you had better give them power and privilege or god will get mad.

Remember that the bible is an ideal document for the purposes of reconciliation and teleology. It is mostly fiction, based loosely on some historical events and characters. You can go back and rewrite earlier bits to suit the bits you have later on, so you get all of your prophecies fulfilled, which appears to give credibility to your story. It works as long as people don't look at your story as teleological specious sophistry, but as a sacred text which no-one dare question and challenge. Its all clever card-trick groundwork.

The story of Jesus also goes back to Job, and the Buddhist story of 'good King Bimbisara'. A good man suffered. These stories reconcile their believers to the reality of a world that is apparently inconsistent with the world view the priests have sold them in return for power and privilege. In order to reconcile the experience of this life with the priests' dogma, the injustices of this world are put off. They will be redressed in an afterlife. Justice will be done, just later. This is typical religious dogma.

This is not what the true prophets, Jesus amongst them, are about. They were and are about justice now. The church merely exists to serve the priest's interests, and those who support the priest's interests because their interests converge. The church has always supported the status quo of power, privilege and exploitation.

The genuine social-prophets, on the other hand, talk of love, of empathizing with each other, of treating each other as extensions of the one universal being, of treating each other as carriers of the same light, the same love, the same truth. See 'Religion' for details.

Spinning 'Ab-originality' into special rights

Talk about maintaining any particular 'culture', say Native aboriginal Australian culture, really misses the point, actually, lots of points. The group of people who defined themselves, and have been defined externally (by groups who define themselves variously as British, or European, or White) as Aborigines, are the descendants of people who migrated to Australia from what we today call Indonesia, between 20 to 40 thousand years ago. By virtue of being the first immigrants, they define themselves as Ab-original, from the original. They imbue this word with a deep spiritual meaning.

They claim to be actually from the land, actually 'created' by it. In this sense they claim a more intimate relationship with the land and therefore greater moral rights than those of the generations of immigrants that proceeded them. The first fleet settlers were defined as immigrants by the aboriginals. The 'first fleeters' distinguished themselves as 'first fleeters', and White British. These 'first fleeters' then considered those that came much later from Britain to be immigrants. This third wave of self-defined migrants then defined those who came even later from the rest of Europe as immigrants.

Each wave considered itself to have more connection with the land and more rights than the waves that came after them. The 'new' immigrants were always considered to have fewer rights, and a more tenuous status, as not-yet-Australian. The first generation of the latest wave then considered themselves to have a more intimate relationship to the land, and therefore greater rights and privileges, than those who came next. To the 'first fleeters' they were all immigrants.

To the descendants of the 'aboriginals', all the people, the 'whiteys', had no moral right to be there. The kangaroos probably felt the same about the first immigrants, the Aborigines themselves. 'Land rights for kangaroos, now!' It's time to set up a 'kangaroo embassy' in Canberra!

It is, therefore, erroneous to refer to any group of Australians as being Ab-original. They all migrated from 'overseas'. They are all migrants. I wonder if even any African tribes are truly Ab-original. You'd have to find the first 'human' settlement in the world to have any chance of finding any human population that was Ab-original. No 'Australian' has a moral or compelling scientific right to claim a more intimate relationship to the land, or any associated special rights over the others. It is all politics, all a struggle over who gets to define things in their own interests.

Those earlier migrants who 'improved' the land were rewarded for their work, and if they were good managers of their resources they were prosperous. The more recently arrived migrants have the same 'moral' rights to grow prosperous from their efforts and contributions to the nation. Of course it is threatening when more recently arrived migrants take attractive jobs which previous migrants who have worked hard all their lives in the nation would have liked to see their own children get.

Now back to our 'Aborigines'. The original migrants brought with them the cultures current to their place and time of origin. They adapted new ways of being and defining, new systems of relationships with each other and their new environment, over the 20 to 40 thousand years in which they lived on the new continent. A new environment, new animals, and constant social innovations and scientific progress would have resulted in changing customs, rituals, traditions, practices, and systems of relating to each other and to their environment.

The rituals, practices, and beliefs that the generation of natives had inherited at the time of the first fleet arrival reflected that current state of culture and tradition. The traditions they had inherited were not the same ones that their oldest descendants had brought with them to Australia from what is now Indonesia. Culture is plastic. It develops reflexively with new experiences and social and intellectual developments.

The oldest descendants would be shocked at how the more recent ones had abandoned their traditions and culture. They would be appalled to see how little respect they had for their own culture. The contemporary culture at the time of the first fleet arrival may have been as alien to the 20 to 40 thousand year old culture of the first 'aboriginal' arrivals, as the culture of the later natives was to the first fleet arrivals.

It is scientifically arbitrary to define any particular culture as more or less deserving of preservation and respect, let alone as deserving of special rights and privileges. To 'ossify' such a living thing as a culture as a final statement about a particular group of people misses the point about culture. The notion of respect for any particular stage of cultural development is a political instrument. It is meant to isolate a particular set of practices and practitioners as more deserving of respect, and of the society's' resources, than its contemporaries.

The dominant hegemonic interests, the privileged elites of a land, define invasion as an attack on a particular 'way of life'. They do this to motivate the masses to repel the invading force. In fact all they are concerned with is losing their own powers and privileges. The invading forces have their own elites, who wish to take the power and privilege from the reigning mob. The masses have little to worry about. The new mob might actually be more competent and fair. You will still hear people comment about the armed service personnel who died for our way of life, and made it possible for us to live in freedom, to enjoy this 'way of life'.

All they did was die defending the privileges and power of a narrow vested interest group, the group who 'owned' all the land and means of production and status and privilege and power and control. Your average Anglo-Saxon, German a few generations removed, had absolutely nothing to fear from either The Kaiser or Adolf Hitler and his

Nazis. Only the aristocracy and the capitalists had anything to lose from a Nazi occupation. Power and privilege merely changes from one narrow vested interest group to the next. The lives of the general masses would not have changed much at all. In fact the British assassinated the Nazi that was administering Czechoslovakia, as he had become too popular with the average people.

The workers in that occupied territory actually experienced better working and living conditions under the Nazi occupation than they had under their previous governments. The ones that were unhappy were the officials that had been kicked out of their cushy jobs to make way for the Nazis. Not much would have changed in Britain. Of course the Irish may have been granted independence from England. Prince Albert, one of the greatest Britons ever, was German. He was the real driving force behind most of the positive innovations and aspirations of Victorian England, including industrialization, free trade, and aspirations for world peace.

Many of the ideals that the British came to cherish originated in fact in Prince Albert. It was through his influence of Queen Victoria that Britain came to dominate much of the world. The word England means Angle-land. The Angles and the Saxons were Germanic tribes that had controlled England up until the Norman Conquest. France had little to lose also. The term France comes from the Germanic tribe of the Franks. The Normans were essentially Germanic peoples from Scandinavia who had settled a few generations earlier in the North of France, before they conquered Britain in 1066.

When someone attempts to defend a culture, to maintain its mutually reflexive sets of definitions and systems of relations, its rituals and institutions, as the final expression of human development, as the way of doing things that should be maintained, respected, reproduced, promoted, and enforced, what they are doing is trying to preserve the privileges and powers that they themselves enjoy under that dominant hegemonic order, that 'way of life'.

Changes to the culture mean changes in defining practices. These include who who gets to work and who gets to play. Of course if in the current culture you get to play and the others have to work, you will want to maintain your way of life. Remember that culture is not so much about food or costume, it is about defining relationships. Culture refers to the ways of defining things that have developed. Sets of relations, practices, and institutions emerge from them. They are the reflexive expressions of them. These practices then re-iterate and reinforce them. They re-produce them.

Cultural innovations, new ways of defining things, threaten the old sets of relations and therefore distributions of privilege and power. If you had it good in the old or current way of defining things and relationships, then you will define any changes as a threat to your own vested interests. You will then use every power at your disposal to have the masses, or at least those who are influential in stopping or making changes, define the current culture as really important to their 'way of life', as in their interests. This will reflexively define any changes as a threat. They will then fight and kill and die and work in factories and pay taxes to defend your privileges and power, and your right to exploit them. They will fight for 'your way of life'. They don't know any better. You have them totally mystified, ignorant, and keen to consume any propaganda you feed them.

Future historians studying our recent history, armed with new insights and awarenesses, will not be able to believe what they read and see and hear. If you put the average 22nd Century person in a theater and show them a good documentary about our lives and times, they will laugh themselves silly. Monty Python actually depicted some historical events with biting accuracy. We laugh at the Witch trial and King Arthur. Future audiences of the sort of documentary-journalistic interrogation of our history I hope will be possible between now and then, will find us absurdly ridiculous.

There is reason to be skeptical of claims of supernatural phenomena

Large amounts of money have been offered for any proof of any super-natural phenomena by an organization known as 'Skeptics' in the U.K. Huge amounts of resources have been poured into projects by the U.S and former U.S.S.R military and intelligence agencies in order to demonstrate and take advantage of any super-natural powers or phenomena. No compelling evidence has ever been documented to support the existence of any super-natural phenomena. Of course, as philosophers, we are open minded to all possibilities. It is, however, counter-productive to continually seek solutions to our problems in superstition and wishful thinking. Further, it is not necessary. We have the tools to optimize our life experience. They are called holistically enlightened self-interest and honesty.

In any case there could only be apparently supernatural phenomena. A middle ages peasant would consider our everyday taken for granted technology as supernatural. Defining something as supernatural is merely reflexive of a lack of comprehension and understanding of phenomena, of The Realities Of Our Nature, And The Nature Of Our Realities. For Stone Age humans every sunrise and sunset were defined as supernatural events. They eventually invented gods to explain them. They sacrificed virgins to ensure the sun would rise. We have astronomy to explain such phenomena. They are no longer defined as supernatural. We no longer need to sacrifice virgins to the gods to ensure that the sun will rise tomorrow.

Cold reading

I was surprised by a television documentary on 'cold reading'. Several people all did same thing. While initially talking with the 'fortune teller' they told her things about themselves, which she simply repeated back to them minutes later. They had already forgotten what they had earlier told her. They were all surprised at how accurate her 'reading' had been. Even those who had initially been skeptic were 'won over'. Of course we, the audience, had the benefit of being detached observers, and could observe the 'trick' being repeated over and over again. As most magicians will tell you, one of the rules of magic is to avoid repeating the same trick, as this allows observers to 'pick up on' the trick.

Cold readers base their initial comments on information the person unwittingly volunteers before they start paying attention to 'the trick'. They also base their 'readings' on sociological statistics regarding the challenges, problems, and situations people are faced with at the 8 typical stages of the human life-cycle. Once they have determined the person's age, they can place them in one of these 8 life stages.

They 'fish' for information by making 'educated guesses' based on the person's age and appearance, and then note their responses. These responses direct the 'cold reader' in the right direction. They follow on with 'hits', and quickly change tact when they 'miss'. The trick is never to commit themselves to any particular speculative assumption.

This means when they are wrong they can avoid 'losing face'. They read the person's gestures to see when their guess has 'hit', and when it has 'missed'. Like the process of evolution, they accumulate hits as they go along. The people being read tend to be amazed by the 'hits', all the while forgetting all the 'misses'. Cold reading is merely 'fishing' for clues and information. Where the reader cannot get anywhere, they simply blame the person for 'blocking' them from making an accurate reading. Statistics

There are lies, damn lies, and then there are statistics. We torture the numbers until they confess. I never trust statistics that I haven't falsified myself.

In our society numbers have been defined as hard, and reason as soft. Numbers are assigned a far greater value than logic or compelling arguments. When we see a number, it appears scientific, rational and factual. We have been trained to give mathematics and 'measurements' a higher status than arguments. This results in the definition of Science as hard, and Social Science as soft. People conventionally speak of 'facts and figures'. The common formulation of such expressions in the popular language culture is a reflection of the hegemonic definitions and systems of relations.

Intellectual rigor and interrogation, the formulation of questions, is discouraged, in favor of finding solutions to the existent questions. The dominant existing questions are essentially reducible to ones of quantity, therefore numbers, usually framed in terms of how we can produce more.

Monopolization of discourses in this way distracts observers from asking questions about how the figures were constructed. In the popular language culture the figures 'speak for themselves'. The existence of such phrases should pique our interrogative attentions. It is the nature of hegemony to have its reflexive definitions and sets of relationships, processes, and outcomes, taken for granted as natural. That figures speak for themselves implies they are not demanding of explanation, or interrogation. That this popular phrase exists should be a flag our interrogations..

Anyone who has ever been involved with statistical collections or survey design and development knows that the most important information about the statistics is how they were constructed. The popular hegemony defines statistics as being passively collected. This simplifies the act of statistical collections as that of merely gathering 'facts and figures'. In fact the final figures are an artifact of a long process.

When we refer to something as an artifact, we are stating that it is a product of the process of defining and measuring. It not an actual property of the thing that we are measuring or defining. It is as such a construct, and not to be mistaken for a one to one reflection of the relationships, processes, or objects we are measuring.

Direct, objective and neutral observation, measurement, or definition, are often not feasible. Often they are actually impossible.

We always use interpretative technologies and techniques to attempt to gain insight into the nature of reality. Our observations are often artifacts of the means by which we observe. We often use indicators rather than actual measurements. We measure what we assume to be representative samples and employ them as indicators. Often the statistics are presented as measurements, when they are merely statistical indicators. There is a large difference. One measurement collects data, the other constructs data. The Unemployment statistic in Australia is currently given as 5%. In fact the actual rate of unemployment is around 30%. The BBC frustrate me continually by reporting that some figure 'shows' rather than 'indicates' something. There is a world of difference between the two concepts.

Leading questions in surveys can also produce artifacts. People are lead to answer questions in particular ways, through the phrasing of questions and pre-ambls, and the social context of the questioning. People often feel obliged to answer a question in a particular way in order to impress, satisfy, or help the questioner. People often respond in ways they think they should, or how they anticipate others will. Ask a particular answer a particular way and you will get a particular answer.

Some surveyors actually design their survey questions to elicit pre-determined, desired answers. They determine, via field testing, which sorts of questions asked in which particular ways are more likely to elicit particular

answers. They then select particular types of questions and their wording to produce the desired responses. In this way they actively, deliberately, construct artifacts that will serve some particular purpose. In this way public opinion can be misled, directed, and constructed. Professional lobbyists are employed to construct such survey data to be used to persuade politicians to act in particular ways that serve the interests of those groups employing the lobbyists.

What questions are selected to be asked, how the concepts and questions are defined, how the questions were interpreted by their target audience, how their responses were interpreted by the surveyors, how these responses were converted into tables and statistics, and finally, and often most importantly, which statistics are finally presented (and which inconvenient, unflattering, or undesirable statistics are withheld), all contribute to the final bias of the constructed statistics.

Often entire survey data collections are suppressed. The Tobacco Institute conducted and paid for detailed and long term studies on the effects of tobacco consumption. The results were unequivocal. Tobacco produced a host of diseases. Tobacco smoke contained a host of pathogens and carcinogens. Tobacco consumption produced lung cancer. This data was never published. It was only 'revealed' by whistle-blowers, at great personal risk and cost.

More often it is merely the less flattering or less desirable statistics which are suppressed. In many cases the findings are simply revised, a.k.a falsified. Inconvenient statistics are simply replaced with fabricated, completely fictitious statistics.

Scientists are often employed to produce favorable environmental impact statements. Lawyers know that is always possible to find some scientist or researcher that will provide statistics and expert knowledge to support any particular position. Lawyers know that the testimony of an expert is often persuasive, especially when a naive jury is involved. What the jury are not given is the 'testimony', the 'expert opinion' of those experts whose 'testimony' or 'opinion' would be unfavorable to the lawyer's client's case.

We have not even considered the dimension of statistics that has the greatest potential for mystification, the actual mathematical science called statistics. Statisticians will warn you that careful selection of particular statistical methods can allow the data to demonstrate a wide range of different interpretations or conclusions. The selection of which statistical method to manipulate the data with can therefore determine what conclusions will be inferred from the data. It is not only necessary to know what assumptions the statisticians have made along the way, but what interpretations could have been arrived at had they used alternative methods.

Armed with an awareness of the hugely problematic nature of statistics, we should never fall into the trap of letting the figures speak for themselves. Who pays the piper calls the tune. Figures rarely speak for themselves. They more often speak for the beneficiaries that payed for their construction. Of course it is those very people who would like you to be naive.

Even where statistics are constructed with the very best of intentions, using the most rigorous of protocols and methods, with the passionate desire to reflect the actual reality they seek to measure, there are still many factors to be considered before considering relying on the figures as accurate measures of what they are designed to reflect, to be indicators of.

The statistic that you should most be wary of is the average. An average of 100 and 2 is 51. When 95 people earn 2 dollars, and 5 people earn a million dollars, then it doesn't take a statistical wizard to see that the most common and representative wage, the mode, is 2 dollars. The average wage, in this case around 50,000 dollars, would be wildly unrepresentative and essentially meaningless. This is not a random example.

Within the western developed world around twenty percent of the population own around eighty percent of all the wealth. Per capita wealth or income is therefore a very problematic indicator of the average person's financial situation. We should always demand tables of data showing the distributions, to see what the most representative statistic is.

Often the mode is more representative than the average or mean. The mode in our example would be 2 dollars, the most common wage. The mode is often more meaningful and communicative than the mean or average.

This is probably why the average has become the most dominant of all statistics. Its hegemonic value is its capacity to mislead, misrepresent, deceive, and mystify.

Unemployment statistics deliberately misleading?

If the official rate of unemployment in Europe and the U.S is over 10%, this really means that many more people are officially employed but not earning enough to survive. These are known as 'the working poor'. They work full-time but still require government assistance to provide for their families. The official estimates for underemployment are around 17%, these are people who work part-time. If 10% of people are unemployed under today's industrial relations environment, it means that most people are barely surviving from their wages. The minimum wage has either been completely scrapped, or is so low, that it is an insult to workers. None of these people show up in official statistics. Hence when you hear of 10% unemployment, be aware that there are many more people barely surviving.

The concept of the average wage is misleading. The majority of workers will never manage to earn this average wage. It is a unrepresentative statistic, due to standard deviation being so high. The mode, or most common wage, is much lower than this average. This means that the 'average wage' is a completely misleading statistic. It implies that most people are earning this wage, when in fact most people are earning much less. The reason is the massive inequality in the labor market.

A minority of people earn very high incomes, and this 'skews' the statistics. I doubt that wages and income ever produced a 'bell-curve'. I doubt that the modal or most common, and the average or mean income, ever converged. Thus the use of this statistic must be viewed as a deliberate form of mystification, to prevent transparency, to mislead the public about the true inequalities in the labor market. In the U.S unemployment benefits only last for a few weeks, so many people simply fall out of the official statistics altogether, as they don't bother officially registering for work. Obama will sign a law extending this to a mere 20 weeks, however this is far from introducing the sort of welfare states that Western Europe has enjoyed for the last 60 years.

Bias

Bias exists automatically in all statistics or information. Bias emerges as a function of what questions are asked and how they are asked. This bias is visible. Other forms of bias are invisible, and do not attract our interrogative attentions. We should always ask ourselves what questions are not being asked. The Tobacco industry provides a clear case of how statistics were in fact collected, and then not officially published, as they were unfavorable to the interests of the Tobacco industry. We should always ask whether in fact statistics are being withheld, whether by private groups, or by our own governments.

In the case of crime statistics, the problem is that such figures only reflect the number and type of crimes actually reported and then taken seriously enough by the authorities to be recorded. Many people will not report crimes. This may occur because the amount of time and energy required to report some crimes may be perceived to outweigh the benefits gained. Non-reporting may be the result of fear of retribution from the reported parties. Shame prevents some people from reporting crimes. Many people have had bad experiences of the legal system and are unwilling to go through burdensome, frustrating, and often punishing investigation and court procedures.

Insurance companies will only have statistics concerning crimes the policy holders report. The policy holders will only report crimes where the payout from the insurance companies warrant it. Small thefts and damage may go unreported as the cost of replacing or repairing the loss or damage is less than the excess the policy holder would have to pay on the claim. They may feel that the time and energy required for the bureaucratic process of reporting and claiming for the loss or damage is unwarranted. Often reporting crimes would lead to a loss of a favorable 'no-claims-bonus'.

We must finally consider what is referred to as 'spin doctoring'. When inconvenient facts cannot be suppressed or denied, then the spin doctors apply their disingenuous specious sophistry to them. They will seek to have the facts dismissed as insignificant. They will seek to change the meaning of the facts, what the Jews traditionally called 'Midrash', when applied to their sacred texts. They will try to put as positive a light or 'spin' on things as possible. They will try to mystify and obstrucify. They will try to distract attention away from the inconvenient facts and onto more convenient ones. They will try to stone the messenger. They will try to discredit the messenger and undermine their 'credibility'. They will put on a show and dance to distract and charm us. They will go into damage control.

Gross Domestic Product: Bias of selectivity

G.D.P is only a measure of the positives in the national economic balance sheet. It therefore only shows the benefits of economic activity. It totally fails to present the costs of economic activity. Resources are consumed in the production of value. Some of these resources are non-renewable, or carry high opportunity costs. When you consume a nonrenewable resource you have depleted your operating environment of a resource. It is gone for good. When you employ a resource in producing one type of value, you sacrifice all the alternative values that it could have been employed to produce.

The Gross Domestic Product indicator does not provide any indication of these costs.

Environmental destruction indicators are not included. GDP is a completely biased figure of economic activity, of value production. It is totally selective.

Production of G.D.P indicators is a very biased, queer accounting practice. Many forms of production are a transaction in which the current generation steal from the next generation. The current generation enjoy the meal and leave the bill for their children to pay. Natural resources we consume or destroy to produce value for us will not be available for future generations. All future generations lose the massively valuable 'ecological services' that we take for granted.

Also GDP figures do not distinguish between products of real value, junk products, and even dangerous products of negative value. An increase in the production and consumption of tobacco, alcohol, pharmaceuticals, and bibles, and an increase in the provision and utilization of services such as GP, dental, and hospital services, cancer treatments and medications, and even armaments, will show up as positives in the GDP figures.

'Biting the hand that feeds'

Capitalism has led to unsustainable agricultural practices. Agriculture is expected to bring the same profits as manufacturing or telecommunications industries. The investors seek to maximize their relatively short term profits. They have no concern for the fundamental 'values' of agriculture. This has led to unsustainable agricultural practices which have destroyed over 50% of the fertility of our soils, and has resulted in over a third of the world's topsoil being lost in the last 100 years. It took thousands of years to build up.

This is due to agriculture being treated as just another means of increasing the returns to capital. Privatizing the 'commons' does not necessarily give people an incentive to preserve them. The same 'tragedy' of overexploitation and destruction can occur whether 'commons' are owned privately or publicly. Capitalists often have very short-term 'horizons'. Shareholders want returns and increased share prices in the short term.

As Keynes' said 'in the long term we are all dead'. Few people consider the impacts of their consumption on future generations. A more holistically enlightened person would say 'in the long run there will be someone around who will pay or benefit due to the decisions we make now, and it might even be 'me'".

Selling our children's future

Gunns Ltd, which enjoyed a 900% increase in its share values over 5 years, makes over 400% profit on wood-chips bought from the Tasmanian State Forestry, which actually loses money on the transaction when seen over the long term. In other words a private corporation gains profits at the expense of a public resource, supposedly managed for and by the State. It then used its political influence, through who knows what corrupt means, to be made exempt from the Freedom of Information (F.O.I) requirements that all comparable corporations would be liable to. A small group of shareholders and executives is thereby allowed to benefit at the expense of the public.

The management of this supposedly public corporation can lie through its teeth, as no one has access to the corporation's records. It can claim that it is managing well, and making a good profit for the state, the public. A narrow vested interest group are able to exploit the public resources in their own interests.

Just as bad, Gunns wood-chip old growth forests for export to Japan, rather than actually making the best use of the old wood. Tasmanian craftspeople have a tradition of producing fine furniture, but they are denied access to State forestry timber. Gunns don't care at all about anything but an easy profit for themselves and their vested interests. They have no interest in public utility or the public good. They have no interest in producing real value, or in employing resources optimally.

Independent accounting audits demonstrated the mendacity of managements claims of profits, demonstrating that they are merely stealing from the future to balance today's books. Any other 'public' organization would find it hard going to explain why the private wood-chipping company they sell to should make a 400% profit while the Tasmanian State Forestry that actually owns the resource should only make a minor profit, or in fact loss.

It shouldn't take a paranoid person to be suspicious of whatever deal Gunns and Tasmanian State Forestry did with the powers that be to gain exception from the standard Freedom of Information provisions. It is these very provisions that were designed to encourage transparency and public accountability in government organizations and government dealings.

Probability versus likelihood

Probability misleads us about determinism. In fact all particular, individual, actual outcomes with either occur or not. There is a 100% certainty that it will or won't happen. However we can calculate how often a particular interaction has produced a particular outcome. We can collect statistics about how many people die from alcohol.

Whether you will die in a car accident is 100% determined. You either will or you won't. However, seen statistically, you have a 1% chance of dying in a car accident, as, on average, in past years, one percent of the population have died in car accidents.

Probability is merely a way of trying to calculate the odds of something happening. However your particular experiences are 100% determined. There is no 'roll of the dice', no 'chance'. Be careful to distinguish between the concepts of statistical probability and likelihood.

The news

The same few people who control big business, also control the media and telecommunications. Do not be fooled by the high number of listed companies. They are owned by the same few people. Their boards have the same few directors. What is presented as news, and as entertainment, in the popular media, is what big business think is in its own narrow vested interests to present. Violence in films is cloaked in nobility and efficacy. Critical reporting and interrogation has no place in the popular media.

Only public access television and radio and a few independent media organizations have any interest in reporting real news, and providing real background investigative journalism. The popular media serve the interests of their masters. They would never promote transparency. They omit the most important information. They select only harmless stories, or ones that reflect the world as they wish us to see it. In the media world the U.S is the white knight, and all the enemies of big business are terrorists, communists, or 'crazies'.

The thousands of innocent casualties of war will go unreported if they can avoid reporting it, and if they can't, they will underestimate the casualties. If that isn't possible, because the independent media have made the true figures public knowledge, then the casualties will be seen as unfortunate, but justifiable. The popular media will show some token speech or gesture of aid from the U.S or Britain, to put a positive and warming touch to the whole report.

The U.S media have been officially banned from showing the arrival of any dead U.S soldiers. In terms of the even greater numbers of severely wounded, incapacitated 'uniformed' victims of the war, they attempt to put a positive spin on the tragedies by selectively showing the few soldiers that somehow manage to be positive in spite of their losses.

We are talking about their losses of limbs, sight, hearing, and often a total loss of faith and security. They won't show the embittered victims. They won't talk about the 'poverty draft', and the 'color draft', the fact that 29% of the U.S Army are poor and of Afro-American descent, whereas African Americans represent only 12 % of the U.S population.

They also won't mention that 28% of black males will spend time in jail at some time during their lives. In many U.S states, including Florida, this means they have lost the right to vote. Apart from keeping incarcerated Afro-Americans from voting, Jeb Bush and his 'mates' were also involved in the wholesale disenfranchisement of the general African American population of Florida. Many Afro-Americans did try to vote, but were prevented from doing so.

The U.S congress would not investigate these claims, even in the face of clear evidence, and requests from the lower house to do so. So much for the Republican administrations claims to being the 'white knight' of democracy. They aren't interested in democracy at home, let alone in Afghanistan or Iraq? The U.S, Iraq, and Afghanistan are merely business interests of the Republic administration. Their personal profit is the beginning and end of any motivations they have.

These facts were not considered newsworthy, or more to the point, didn't serve the interests of the dominant hegemonic interests, whom the entire Bush family are aligned with. Reporting them would not be in the interests of big business, which the Republican Party in general represents and promotes.

Radio has a huge impact on public opinion. People listen to the radio in their cars, at work, and at home. Clear channel, a U.S corporation who own 1200 radio stations across the U.S, organized pro-war rallies, in the most blatant act of 'manufacturing consent' that I can think of.

A recent study of television news revealed an absurd amount of collusion between all the major media outlets. What do I mean? The news announcers of every channel reported the same 'news items' verbatim, that is,

word for word. The announcers used exactly the same words to describe exactly the same 'events' considered 'newsworthy'. It is clear that all the channels are working together, and reading from the same script. But who is writing that script? Read my new book '911 (Five Minutes to Midnight?) to find out.

Public opinion as sentiment constructed for, and consumed by, the public

Governments often justify their actions regarding tobacco, alcohol, and other illegal drugs, by reference to public sentiment, or public opinion. However such references in public discourses are not compelling arguments. Such arguments are massively teleological, circular, and specious. Popular sentiment or public opinion on the subject of tobacco and alcohol is the result of decades of media promotion, marketing, campaigning, and lobbying on the part of tobacco and alcohol producers, and various policing agencies, politicians, and public institutions. Such propaganda has defined alcohol and tobacco products as acceptable and desirable. We have inherited this 'hegemonic' myth. It is ingrained. It has become a part of the 'noetic' landscape that we take for granted.

It is only very recently that governments supported the calls of the medical profession to 'inform' people about the dangers of tobacco products. It is even more recent that governments took steps to protect people from 'forced tobacco product consumption'. Politicians were slow to act as they had been 'bought off' by lobby groups. The political process is by nature corrupt. Defining tobacco consumption as anti-social met with great resistance by those who didn't want their addiction publicly revealed as a 'drug addiction', and those who didn't want their families, partners, friends, and colleagues, defined as drug addicts. No-one wanted to be defined as a person who was willingly inflicting terrible suffering on innocent victims. No-one wants to be defined negatively, or have those they are associated with defined negatively.

The general population didn't want to be 'informed' about the reality of tobacco consumption, and the forced consumption of toxic waste products by those in the vicinity of smokers. So the general public was no more 'innocent' than the tobacco lobbyists.

The lobby groups had an easy job of seducing the politicians and the public. No-one resisted, apart from a few people who fought back to protect their own health, and those who 'blew the whistle' on the tobacco industry. These people were defined as obsessive by the popular culture. They were marginalized, mocked, ridiculed, and victimized. It is these few that we have to thank for the massive changes in 'public opinion' regarding 'forced tobacco consumption', and the growing decline in the demand, by willing consumers, of tobacco products. They are true heroes. Probably no military leader, inventor, or discoverer has saved more lives, and contributed more to our wellbeing, than these truly 'great' people. They deserve a collective Nobel Prize. Congratulations!!!

Public opinion is no compelling argument for anything except how constructed public opinion is

Revelations concerning the tobacco phenomena compel us to interrogate the nature of public opinion, and the discourses which seek to raise public opinion to the status of compelling argument. Such revelations compel us to question how such a situation can arise, one in which a clearly destructive product can gain social acceptance, even 'glorification', while the opponents of such products can be labeled as trouble makers. What hegemonic defining practices and relationships allow such a state of affairs to exist, and to go uninterrogated?

Public opinion is a construct of the mass media, which is owned or controlled by a very few individuals who have the power to condition you to have a certain opinion about a certain issue, and probably more importantly, to have *no* opinion on the most important issues, which they never inform you about.

The poetic teleology of public opinion

The first step in interrogating this state of affairs is to define it. Narrow vested interest groups can 'market' particular definitions of things via direct media campaigns, indirect sponsoring of events, product placements in movies, payed comment and bias in media reports in television and print media, and direct lobbying. Lobbyists employ persuasive, disingenuous specious sophistry to manipulate public opinion and political decision makers. They also corruptly purchase influence outright, with money and other seductive inducements. Remember that politics is the marketplace for definitions.

The ultimate effect of these actions is to have the definitions of the vested interest groups accepted and naturalized in the popular culture, and institutionalized as public sentiment or public opinion. These narrow vested interests groups then construct surveys to discover 'this public opinion'. The very public opinion they have constructed is then used to justify their own definitions. The public is inside the loop. Thus they are, ironically, impressed with how well their own opinions are apparently reflected in public opinion surveys!

These survey results convince other members of the public that public sentiment is so and so, and should be respected, and institutionalized into laws and regulations, or, more significantly, the absence of laws and regulation. The whole process is poetic in its teleology. This is the way in which the popular culture, the popular language culture, the public sentiment, and public opinion, are all reflexively and teleologically constructed.

Over a century ago Schopenhauer stated that: 'there is no opinion, however absurd, which men will not readily embrace as soon as they can be brought to the conviction that it is generally adopted.' Most people will 'go along with' (mitlaufen), whatever they think everyone else thinks. All you need to do is give them the impression that everyone else is of a certain opinion regarding an issue, and they will adopt that 'opinion' as their own.

This is how public opinion is 'constructed' a-la Lippmann, and later, Chomsky. Public opinion reflects the way the public define and interpret things, what meanings things have for them.

To state it simply, public opinion is constructed by the most powerful. It is marketed and consumed by the public, who then 'own' it. The 'producers' of public opinion then survey this public opinion. They then present the 'results' of the survey to the public, to reinforce the opinions as 'sound' ones. It is satisfying and reassuring to have 'your' opinions validated, that is, shared, by 'the majority', by the 'public'. The survey results will reinforce your own 'opinion', and entrench it further. You will feel 'justified' in your opinion.

Many people will simply go along with 'public opinion' in order to prevent social friction, to avoid being 'marginalized', and at worst, being victimized and defined as stubborn, difficult, or mentally ill. People who don't necessarily share an opinion will thereby act as if they do, and further reinforce, validate, and reassure those who responded to the survey, the 'public', in their opinions. Of course this cycle is iterative, and continues.

The 'card trick' was set up while no-one was paying attention. Once the opinion produced for public consumption is consumed and the public take 'ownership' of the opinion, there is no looking back. No-one will question this public opinion, let alone seek out its source, that is, interrogate its very nature.

In this way the 'hegemony' of the constructed public opinion is institutionalized and naturalized. This is one way in which social reality is produced, and consumed, to become the subjective reality of most people. Public opinion is social reality. It is so cleverly constructed that we feel that it reflects our personal reality, rather than the other way around!

Of course there is that phenomena called 'push-polling', in which, one way or another, a respondent is presented with implicitly or explicitly misleading information about other people's opinions. People are generally loathe to contradict what appears to be 'public opinion'. People want to fit in, be accepted, validated, and to belong. You get validated by validating others. You gain status by complying, at least nominally, with the hegemonic

definitions, with public opinion. You don't want to be defined as 'difficult'. Most people will 'go along to get along'. This explains the phenomenon of 'mitlaufen' and 'collective ignorance'.

If you simply 'suggest' that the public has a particular opinion, many people will express their agreement with it, for fear of being 'marginalized' and so on. Of course if there is any real threat of victimization associated with not expressing their agreement with an opinion, virtually everyone will concur. They know what happens to 'dissidents'. They end up unemployed, in prison, in gulags, in exile, in work camps, on the 'pyre', on 'the rack', or at very least, marginalized, rejected, abandoned, and left to die, alone.

Apparently in North Korea they will punish not only you, but several generations of your offspring, for any 'crime' against the state. Dissent, challenging the dominant hegemonic social reality, is of course the fundamental crime in any totalitarian regime.

At the organizational level public opinion is of the intra-organizational type. The official opinion that everyone who is 'sane' will subscribe to is that 'there are no problems here'. Because if they don't they will be victimized, or patronized with questions such as ...'exactly what don't you understand about this opinion that means you fail to agree with it?', implying they are ignorant, incompetent, or mentally deficient. As we have already considered, anyone who does not comply with this view will end up marginalized, and excluded, alone. They will be victimized if they seek to actually have problems identified, let alone 'dealt with'. They will end up unemployed, defined as mentally ill, and effectively unemployable. By definition, within the social reality, they are. One definition of mental illness is that your perceptions of reality are distorted or unreliable. The dissident is by definition, reflexively and teleologically within the loops of social reality, stark raving insane. They don't see what everyone else sees, and which, hegemonically, is, well, there.

Push Polling

The following question has been raised in the media recently. At least it appears to be a question. Implicit in the question is an assumption. If you respond to the question, you are internalizing that assumption into your noetic structure. You are participating in, and validating, the hegemonic discourses.

The 'question' appears to be passive and innocent enough. In fact it is one of the most treacherous and insidious forms of covert or subliminal public opinion construction. It is the phenomena of push polling.

The push poller appears to be passively asking a question, when they are in fact actively promoting an idea. When we are asked 'Should the government sanction the use of torture to prevent terrorism?', we are lead to implicitly assume that torture is an efficacious means of preventing terrorism. It comes in under our radar. We aren't asked about whether we think torture might be efficacious in preventing terrorism. When we approach the question naively, we implicitly assume it is. The 'question' is then of whether we would employ efficacious means to preventing terrorism.

This itself is a non-question. Who wouldn't employ efficacious means to prevent terrorism? It is like asking someone whether they are a patriot, or think innocent women and children should be murdered by terrorists. This is not a serious question. In order to avoid the appearance of supporting terrorism, of being unpatriotic, and not loving mothers and children, you will have to agree to the use of torture. No-one is challenging the notion of the efficacy of torture to prevent terrorism. It is an example of push-polling.

If I ring you up and ask, do you support the current labor party policies of increasing unemployment? I have discretely propagandized against the labor party, and biased you against them. Of course you don't like policies to increase unemployment. Subliminally they have suggested a connection between voting for the labor party and promoting unemployment.

The supposed question is actually propaganda intended to suggest subliminal connections, to construct non-conscious meanings and relationships below the level of your rational, critical, aware, informed, critical, intelligence. You would answer with 'no, of course not', and after you hung up you would be concerned about the Labor Party's apparent policies of increasing unemployment!

In fact torture is not efficacious at gaining intelligence from the victim. Under torture the victim will say whatever they think the torturer wants to hear, and which would make them stop torturing them. In other words they will merely tell them what they want to hear. They will identify other people as terrorists merely to satisfy the torturers desire to hear such statements.

People persecuted as witches in the middle-ages would say anything to get the torturer to stop inflicting their pain. Death was the reward for admitting to being a witch or a heretic, and for identifying other witches and heretics, those who the torturer suggested as acceptable 'answers' that would lead to an end to the torture. In the middle ages this was a lucrative business for the priests, church, and state. The wealth of someone burnt as a witch became the property of the church and state, and the 'witch-finder' received a handsome fee.

It is true that torture does make people talk. The problem is that they will say whatever they think will bring an end to their suffering. Sometimes the information might be useful. The problem, from a purely instrumental, practical amoral position, is that you really need to know the answers before you interrogate and torture, not to merely end up chasing phantoms and torturing ever more potential terrorists or co-conspirators in a pointless exercise. You really have to have already identified the terrorist perpetrator and leader, and have already caught them, before you can rely on any information you gained through torture. This defeats the nominal purpose of torture. It is the tail wagging the dog.

You would already have to have known that a terrorist act was to take place, who was organizing it, and who was carrying it out, before you could employ torture efficaciously. Otherwise all you end up doing is torturing every suspect you come across. Each will, under torture, tell you what they think they need to, what they think you want to hear. They will make any utterance they feel, or are told, will bring an end to the torture. They will lead you wherever you want to be lead. All the while the real terrorists will be going about their business free from your attentions. You will be following your own nose.

Under some political systems the terror and torture were used statistically. There was no concern that 100,000 innocent victims would need to be victimized in order to catch a few real criminals. In fact Stalin imposed quotas on his secret police. They were to catch a certain number of criminals and send them to the gulags. The assumption was that there were, statistically speaking, likely to be a certain number of criminals. So the job of the secret police and such was to catch that number of 'criminals'. Stalin didn't care how many innocent victims were caught in the dragnet.

The current U.S Republican administration seem to have a similar attitude. They are employing torture themselves at Guantanamo Bay, and conspiring and colluding with Egyptian authorities to whom they deliver 'suspects' to be tortured. They are arresting people on the mere 'suspicion' of involvement in terrorist networks, and 'detaining' them for unlimited periods of time, denying them their human rights, and their rights to legal representation and a trial.

They nominally justify these actions in the name of a 'war on terror', while at the same time denying terrorists their rights as 'combatants' under the Geneva Convention. The same Abu Grahb prison used by Saddam Hussein for torture, was then used by the American 'liberators' to torture more Iraqis. All 12 official investigations of this torture focused on the lowest levels in the chain of command. This continues the tradition of 'scapegoating' those with the least power.

TROONATNOOR: COMPELLING ARGUMENTS

Interrogations

People demand rigor in their surgeons, lawyers, manufacturers, designers, political leaders, and so on. Rigor is the word they use when they want someone to be anal, fussy, or pedantic. People enjoy rigor it when it is directed against others, and in their perceived interests. People deride and criticize 'pedantry' it when it is directed against them and their perceived interests. People don't want to be interrogated.

They do not want their personal dealings to be made transparent. People demand that other people's dealings be made transparent. They will criticize others for behaving with exactly the same intentions they themselves behave with. They criticize others for taking advantage of opportunities that they themselves would, were they presented with the opportunities, take advantage of. People are merely jealous. The victim is no better than the perpetrator. It is merely that the perpetrator had the opportunity.

Intellectual rigor: Principles of critical reasoning and compelling arguments

It would avoid a lot of conflict if we could agree on operational criteria or principles for evaluating the soundness or validity of arguments. According to the philosophy of knowledge there can be no absolute truth, knowledge, or proof as such, no certainty. What we must evaluate, in the pursuit of intellectual rigor, is the degree to which an argument is compelling. We must be able to differentiate between compelling and specious arguments, and have consensus on the criteria we will apply in making this judgment. We will then be able to rid ourselves of the pestilence of specious arguments.

A specious argument is one that is only convincing at face value, and falls apart on closer interrogation. An intellectually rigorous argument should demonstrate the properties detailed in the following section. The degree to which arguments demonstrate these properties will be the degree to which they demonstrate intellectual rigor. The more intellectually rigorous an argument is, the more compelling we should consider it to be.

Logic

Logic is of the nature; if x is true, and y follows from x , then y is true. Logic does not relate to the validity, the correctness, of assumptions. As such logic does not relate to the correctness of conclusions. Sound logic does not guarantee that conclusions are correct. Logic only ensures that statements made follow from one another. Sound logic only allows us to say that, if x has been demonstrated to be true, that y is true, if it can be demonstrated that y follows logically from x . Logic refers to whether statements are 'sequitur'. A non-sequitur statement is one in which the antecedent, later statement does not follow logically from the precedent, earlier one. 'He drives a red car therefore he must be German', is an example of a non-sequitur statement. It is not uncommon that a grand theory falls apart upon interrogation, as one finds such non-sequiturs in its foundations. Only transparently presented arguments allow us to judge the logic of all statements in relation to each other.

Internal consistency or integrity

An argument is usually made up of a number of supporting arguments. When each supporting argument is consistent with other supporting arguments, then the argument is internally consistent. This means that the values, meanings, or definitions of x and y must be consistent throughout the entire argument. The relationship between X and Y must also be consistent, as this relationship is itself a 'meaning' within the context of the argument. Meaning is the relationship between things. We must be wary to ensure that that X and Y have not been assigned convenient or arbitrary values to suit particular arguments at particular times, at the whim of the arguer, to suit their purposes.

If we were talking about a person, we would be talking about their 'integrity'. Be wary of subtle, unflagged changes in meanings, values, or definitions during the course of an argument. They make the noetic landscape very treacherous to the interrogator. The most common lack of integrity takes the form of insisting on justice for yourself in particular, without a concern for justice 'in general', that is, in principle.

Internal Coherency

When each argument contributes to the logical development of the overall argument, and the final conclusion, then the argument is coherent. A coherent argument places less burden on the interlocutor to understand the argument, and makes the argument easy to follow, comprehend, interrogate, evaluate, and judge. We should be able to follow an argument step for step. We should not be imposed upon to take great leaps from one part of the argument to the next. We must be suspicious of the potential for low coherence to be used as a tool for mystification. It can be deliberately employed to increase the 'interrogation burden', to tire and de-motivate potential interrogators.

This is often the deliberate tactic employed by lawyers to drag out legal proceedings unnecessarily, to force their opponents' clients to give up in despair, or to guarantee that no resolution is possible within their life-time, or within their financial means.

Falsifiability and the Scientific Method

A true philosopher or scientist is one who is looking for the truth, and not merely seeking to prove themselves, or something, right. An argument is falsifiable if it is formulated in a way that allows it to be tested, to see how compelling its assumptions, logic, and conclusions in fact are. Falsifiability is intrinsic to the Scientific method, which is defined by the empirical testing of hypotheses. This means that the scientist formulates their argument in terms of a statement, a hypothesis, that is falsifiable. It can be tested, and is open to interrogation. The scientist then tests this hypothesis empirically, by performing experiments, by conducting research, or by constructing statistical tests, to see if they can disprove their hypothesis. The intention is to challenge their own hypothesis, assumption, or idea.

It is important to recognize that an idea or theory is not necessarily wrong just because it is inconsistent with other 'accepted' ideas, otherwise referred to as conventional wisdom, 'knowledge' or 'facts'. The new 'inconsistent' idea may demonstrate that the conventional wisdom is not in fact compelling.

We need to explicitly suspend judgment temporarily while we 'adjust' our world views or beliefs, to see what transformations take place if we assume that the new idea is valid or correct. The 'new' total may add up to a more compelling 'big picture' than the old one. In this case it may compel us to re-adjust our beliefs or 'knowledge'. The new idea may require us to change much of our conventional wisdom.

This is one reason why small changes in assumptions or beliefs can threaten entire hegemonic systems. They can lead to whole systems being challenged, and therefore threaten the vested interests served by these systems. Challenging an especially fundamental notion such as cause and effect begins a chain of interrogations, like a new lead in a 'cold' case that has been closed for decades. These new leads compel the interrogator to re-open the case. These leads provide new directions to be pursued.

A falsifiable argument is one that makes itself as open to interrogation as possible. Such an argument is as transparent and coherent as possible to encourage and facilitate interrogation. Such an argument makes our quest to understand it as less time and energy consuming as possible. We want to encourage others to demonstrate that we are wrong. Only when no-one can demonstrate compellingly that we are wrong, can we begin to define our argument or theory as 'compelling'. This is the key element of Scientific method.

Transparency

An argument is transparent when all the assumptions and lines of reasoning it is composed of are made explicit, and therefore open to evaluation. This allows interlocutors to note any omissions or faults on the part of the arguer. It enables interlocutors to see what information and arguments have been, and have not been considered by the person putting forward the argument. It can be used as an indication of the level of intellectual rigor they have employed.

We must be aware that every component of an argument may contain assumptions which are taken for granted, as given, as natural. It is not only the stated, the explicit assumptions in an argument that we must evaluate. Often it is the hidden, implicit assumptions with-in, and underlying the argument that are the most important. Many assumptions that are made by an arguer will not be flagged by them.

Often they themselves are genuinely unaware they have made an assumption, or that they are basing an argument on an assumption someone else has made and has not tested. These must be revealed to be assumptions. They must be challenged, interrogated, and made explicit. All the assumptions and supporting arguments of an argument must be made transparent. Often this interrogation must be made by persons not closely involved in the formulation of the arguments.

Those of you who have tried to proof-read your own work will know how hard such a simple task can be. What is often obvious to a 'fresh' pair of eyes, eyes outside the argument, can go undetected by the eye that has been looking at the argument for too long from with-in the argument. Remember that we do not simply 'see' the world around us, we not-consciously select from our environment, and actively construct our 'experiences' of it. It is easy for us to overlook problems in our arguments that the newcomer to them can detect at a glance.

It is for this reason that teamwork is so productive, even when it can be so frustrating. A partner can bring their 'fresh' eyes and minds to the problem, and identify details in an argument that we fail to notice, being so immersed as we are in the totality of the argument. They will also be less likely to conveniently 'overlook' things, consciously or unconsciously, that we might be tempted to, due to our emotional investments in the argument.

Clarity

Communication requires the coding of meaning into language intended to convey it, the transmission of this message to the receiver, the decoding of these transmissions by the receiver, and the receivers' confirmation of that meaning with the sender. I want to know if you find me attractive. I find the words to ask you, 'do you find me attractive?' You listen, and hear 'do you find me attractive?'. You then ask me to confirm with 'you just asked me if I find you attractive?' I confirm this. Yes.

Sometimes people are tempted to ascribe intentions to others which they do not in fact have. People often unconsciously project intentions onto others that rightly belong to themselves. When the sender seeks 'confirmation' of their intended meanings, it is necessary to validate the intention of the sender. Arguing that the sender meant something other than what they say they meant isn't productive. Twisting other people's words is unfair. It is a form of violence.

When an interlocutor states that you have misunderstood them, then you must accept this and go back to the point where the misunderstanding occurred and start from there anew. Otherwise the argument will be unproductive, even bitter, as each contests the intended meanings of the other. The denial of intended meaning, and thereby invalidation of the sender, is often a deliberate ploy on the part of some sophists to frustrate interlocutors and thereby avoid genuine interrogation.

If sophists, later in an argument, claim a meaning for an utterance which does not reflect the original intended meanings they gave it, then we must go back to the point at which that utterance had importance to the argument. We can then allow the interlocutor to rebuild their argument from that point, using the new definitions or meanings. In this way we can maintain consistency. We may never, however, allow them to simply change their meanings mid-argument, as it suits their purposes.

An utterance may only have one meaning for the entirety of an argument, and must be consistent with the meanings used in all internal and external supporting or underlying arguments. It is therefore necessary to check that the current user of an utterance uses it with the same the meaning or definition as it has been used by others whose arguments the current user is using in support of their own arguments. This may require a lot of research. Sometimes one philosopher's argument has been used by another philosopher in a non-consistent way, in fact in a way that they would be appalled or bemused to discover. I can only imagine what Jesus would make of the Catholic Church, or what Mohamed would make of the Taliban.

Rather than assume that any meaning is shared, we must clearly and precisely declare the meanings we intend words and concepts to have. This is an element of transparency. Of course sophists may deliberately employ ambiguity, incoherency, and a lack of clarity, to confuse, mislead, mystify, obstrucify, and burden those evaluating their arguments.

Absence of Dogma

Dogma are assumptions that are merely asserted to be true, without compelling evidence, or compelling arguments, to support them. Their subscriber will not submit to intellectual rigor, or scientific method. Articles of faith, whether of the Catholic Church, or Republican 'Voodoo' economics, are dogmatic. Dogma is purely relativistic. No particular dogma is any more compelling than any other. Dogma is often hidden within hidden, implicit assumptions. Many belief systems are in fact built upon dogma. The proponents of such belief systems do everything they can to mystify their arguments, and deflect interrogation, to avoid their dogma being identified as dogma. They will, in desperation, seek to contaminate reason with fatuous and dangerous notions of 'reformed epistemology'.

Absence of Teleology

An argument is circular, or teleological, when it bases its conclusions on its own assumptions. I am infallible, therefore I am right about this as well! The most famous is the 'liars dilemma' 'I never lie, therefore you can believe that I am telling the truth right now! It is not valid to use one argument that has not yet been demonstrated to be compelling, to support the current argument. It is not valid to justify or legitimate one assumption with another assumption.

This is qualitatively different from requesting that we 'suspend judgment' until an argument can be fully articulated. This is a necessary concession that must be made to all arguments. The difference between suspending judgment and dogma is that the request is made explicitly, and it is limited in its duration. At some point the 'suspension' will be lifted, and the assumption will have to fend for itself. It will then sink or swim in relation to the entirety of the argument it is embedded in. Catholics and so on have left their god suspended for millennia. There's an icon of him 'suspended' above the door of the office I'm currently writing in.

Examples of teleology include this one from a famous Monty Python sketch. 'Witches have big noses. She has a big nose. She must be a witch'. The creationist and 'intelligent design' teleology is that the world was created. Somebody must have created it. Therefore a creator (god), exists. In both cases the initial assumptions are paraded as 'evidence'. For these 'pseudo-arguments' to carry any weight, we have to assume witches exist and have big noses. You have to assume that things can be created. You will assume things can be created if you assume that the world was created. You will then, reflexively, assume that some creator (god), exists. Reflexively, if some god created the world, then things can be created.

The trick and danger of teleology is that the initial assumptions are often implicit, and thus hidden from interrogation. Our focus is directed towards the conclusions rather than these hidden assumptions. We unknowingly accept assumptions without attending to them. We fail to even recognize them as assumptions at all. It is like card tricks, where we are distracted, and our attention is diverted away from the preparation for the trick while it is being set-up. We are not paying attention during the 'spiel'. We begin paying attention too late for our best efforts to reveal anything.

We consider merely that the conclusions appear to validate the assumptions, as they are all internally consistent with one another. We don't seek 'proofs' for the assumptions, as they appear validated already. We must always remind ourselves to seek our proofs outside of the argument. We must identify each assumption, seeking out the implicit ones, rather than let the 'trickster' keep our attention firmly glued to the explicit ones that are harmless in terms of being able to reveal his 'trick'. We must then test these assumptions outside of the 'loop'. Within the loop of religion, everything is created. In the real world, nothing can be created. We have thus saved ourselves a lot of time and effort which we might otherwise have 'wasted' in seeking to try to comprehend and solve a 'pseudo problem'.

Circular or teleological arguments are usually of the 'ought-is' variety. The arguer wants proposition or X to be true, or is unaware that X is an assumption. The desire for x to be true is based on inherited desires and preferences. The ignorance of the problematic nature of X, that it is in fact an assumption, is a result of conditioning via the inheritance of a social reality. X may be desired as an end in itself. Alternatively it may be needed as a means to an ends, because another argument is dependent on X being true. The assumption X, then, might be offered as an argument in itself, such as 'god exists', or as an assumption supporting a further argument, such as, 'god wants you to obey me'.

Further, it may be offered as the 'proof' of an apparently independent argument or chain of arguments such as 'Moses speaks the truth'. In the usual context in which it is embedded, this statement is dependent for its veracity or compellingness on the assumptions that Moses speaks for a god, that the god referred to exists, that this god has prophets, that this god has selected Moses as his prophet, and that prophets tell the truth. In reality X is often taken

for granted as it is embedded in, reflexive of, and consistently reinforced by, the dominant or hegemonic social reality.

That X 'should' be desired is also taken for granted. Most people appear to assume that free-will is desirable, or that life is preferable to death, or that anyone who wants to kill themselves must be mentally ill. We must first identify that we have assumed that something should be the case, before we can apply Hume's 'guillotine' and stop ourselves from teleologically arguing that it therefore is.

Most people reject determinism out of hand, because they like the idea of 'free-will', and because without 'free-will' it is hard to justify punishing people when they transgress against us. People assume we live in a meritocratic society, otherwise they can't define the world as fair, and their own wealth and privilege as earned and therefore legitimate, fair, even 'moral'. Hindus assume that our behavior in past lives determines our 'caste' in this life, otherwise how could they justify exploiting the lower castes while pretending to be 'spiritually enlightened' Brahmins? The assumption of karmic justice reconciles their behavior with how they desire to define themselves, their actions, and the universe.

In the 'argument' that 'At the physical level there's certainly no absolute determinism - if there was, this would exclude free will', the speaker simply excludes the possibility of absolute determinism as they don't like the implications of it. The speaker desires free will, so they must reflexively deny determinism. What gets me is that they do it so blatantly, like a child throwing a tantrum of denial. How someone could publicly utter such a circular statement reveals that such statements are considered acceptable by most people. Most people wouldn't even recognize the problematic nature of such circular statements. Such statements form the basis of most people's noetic structures and belief systems. Most of the time such 'logic' is simply tacit and implicit. It is usually not stated explicitly, so most people are unaware that such 'sub-arguments' and 'sub-logic' underlies their logic and arguments.

Circular arguments flow so effortlessly and so unchallenged from people's mouths that we can see how powerful the 'social reality' is. Whoever gets to define the 'social reality' has the ultimate power, as it is total, totally effortless to maintain, and totally unobtrusive or invisible. It is better than invisible. In fact it is there for anyone to see. Anyone who wants to see. Remember that you have to want to be seduced. One of the greatest strengths of the hegemonic social reality is that it is to a large degree totally consistent with what most people want to be true. It appeals to human nature. As John Milton's Satan exclaims in 'Paradise lost'(1667), most people consider that it is 'Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven'. What I mean is that they prefer to reject my 'Protocols' in favor of the illusion of free will embedded in the status quo.

Even if you want to see, you still need to be 'trained' to see. You need to be trained to see the obvious. I once commented to myself quite paradoxically or cryptically that 'nothing is hidden, nothing is seen'.

If you add 'premature cognitive commitment' to such desires, you can see how social reality can emerge. Read more in 'Convergences'. If you add the power of the hegemonic media to that, you can see how social reality is constantly reinforced and reproduced. If all this fails, the hegemonic powers that be will simply revert to sheer terror and violence. They define those who challenge the hegemonic social reality as witches, heretics, and Satanists. They torture them till they confess that the social reality is real, before killing them just to make sure they don't change their expressed views. In more 'sophisticated' times they define them as 'mentally ill' and either imprison them in 'clinics' or confine them to 'chemical straight-jackets' in the form of psycho-tropic pharmaceuticals.

Theosophists are a specific case in question, but one which is general in being reflexive of how most people imagine their thought processes operate. They claim that their 'free will' makes decisions which it imposes upon the physical brain. However there is no reason to assume that, and no compelling reason not to assume the opposite, that the physical brain determines courses of action, and then imposes them on what the person considers to be their 'free will'.

In fact the latter statement requires less by way of assumption, requiring no assumption either of anything other than a brain, which we can observe and measure, nor any assumption of 'free will'. We only need a brain, which we have, and a desire, motivation, or 'will', which we have. We don't need to complicate things by assuming anything

else, let alone things we can't even observe or precisely define. In this way we can satisfy both Hume's 'guillotine' and Occam's 'razor' by simply defining will as the determined product of our brain's functioning. There is no need to assume anything to see how our 'wills' could ultimately be the product of a deterministic evolution.

Many of the most powerful teleologies or circular arguments are ubiquitous and invisible. They are hegemonic. They are taken for granted. They are consumed and reproduced without interrogation. They are conventional wisdom, articles of faith, unchallenged 'dogma'. Many assumptions have never been challenged. Of course thousands of people have been tortured, hung, drawn and quartered, burnt alive, and condemned to an eternity of hellfire, for merely politely suggesting we might consider taking a closer look at the hegemonic dogma, and challenging conventional wisdom.

The three philosophers who, in their day, challenged the conventional wisdom that the earth was at the center of the universe, were all threatened by their contemporary 'powers that be' with fates worse than death simply for challenging the anthropocentric notion that man was at the center of the universe.

Most teleologies are merely taken for granted as articles of faith, or worse, given the lofty status of 'facts'. To the intuitive interrogator, something merely 'smells' a little suspicious. They 'feel' that something, somewhere, in everything they have seen and heard, just doesn't add up. Due to the overreaching power of mystification and naturalization, they cannot at first identify what is wrong, just that something is wrong.

Only painstaking interrogation and de-construction reveals the source of their concern. De-construction or 'Analysis' is the process of following the argument backwards, step for step, assumption for assumption, until we arrive at the fundamental assumptions or arguments underlying the entire argument, and therefore its conclusions.

Using the card trick analogy, we ask the trickster to go back step for step, back through the spiel and patter, until we come to the behaviors where the trick was actually set up. Most people are not aware that the trick is set up well before we start paying attention, and they won't demand that the trickster trace their steps back far enough to when the trick actually took place. In the same way, most people aren't aware that the assumptions that make all the difference are the earliest ones made in an argument, or the ones thrown in while we're not paying attention.

The specious sophist, like the card trickster, seeks to mystify, to deflect your attention away from the most important part of the trick, to prevent you asking the right questions, the important questions, the more fundamental questions, from de-constructing the arguments or tricks back far enough to where all the damage is done, to where the trick is actually set up. Alternatively, they deflect our attention for a moment with some clever device, to slip some assumption or distortion in, some 'trick', while we are paying attention to the clever distraction. It is often this later 'addition' that has all the power to trick us, to deceive, to mystify.

The specious sophist will get you to focus on the question: Who or what created the universe? Few ever de-construct the question itself. The assumption that something or someone created the universe is taken for granted. We begin all our 'pondering' at this level of the argument. The fundamental question is assumed to be 'who created the universe?' Well gosh, darn it, someone must have created the universe then, and so I guess the only logical conclusion is that it is this fellow 'god' who did it!

Of course implicit in the question is the assumption that things can be created. When you de-construct the argument further you find yourself challenging the ideology of cause and effect. You may then realize that nothing can be created. In this case the question of who created the world becomes nonsensical. The priests' card trick is then revealed.

Up until you went deeper into the posed question, and saw that it contained implicit, unstated assumptions that had gotten your 'tacit' approval, and your subsequent revelations on the ideology of cause and effect, you had focused all your attention and energies on a mystifying question, an invalid question, a question based on pure teleology and dogma, on false or invalid assumptions. The priest seemed to have a pretty convincing argument. The priests spiel was ineffable, unchallengeable. Only when you looked deeper, and further back in the trick, did you become aware of the nature of the trick. You can now admire how cleverly the priest had held you in thrall with their apparently undeniable, self-evident argument.

The priest had mystified you into focusing on that part of their spiel that would never reveal the trick. Only when you began meditating around the spiel did you begin heading in the right direction, backwards into the argument, into the hidden assumptions that preceded it, that underlie it, that teleologically (nominally) supported it. The priest had you. Something must have created the universe, right? But if the universe always was, then there was no need to assume anything had created it. In fact his whole 'argument' was moot, as nothing could create it.

The universe evolves from its primal properties which interact to produce propergents which interact to produce the universe and our experience of it. There is no need to invent a 'god' to explain the existence of the world, or our experience of it. Once we eliminate the invalid ideology of cause and effect and replace it with the valid principle of interactions and outcomes, process of evolution becomes intuitive. We lose any need to invent gods to 'explain' TROONATNOOR.

Experience teaches the interrogator that no assumption is harmless or insignificant. Iterative and reflexive interrogations of the tiniest details reveals how the hegemonic social reality is produced and reproduced by encouraging the deflection of interrogation from subtly problematic faults in apparently minor arguments. The credibility of major foundation arguments is dependent on lots of 'little' deceptive assumptions, disingenuous specious sophistry, and outright lies, being left un-interrogated.

These lies are so old or so much a taken for granted part of the 'furniture' that they eluded interrogation. These ubiquitous, insidious, inconspicuous, taken for granted, thoroughly naturalized and institutionalized assumptions were the most significant and powerful. These assumptions went under the radar and eluded interrogation. The hegemonic conventional wisdom or 'knowledge' appears to be on solid ground. Only upon unwinding its intrinsic teleologies does it become transparent, and we see the 'house of cards' for what it is. It is then that we understand why the hegemonic powers were so nervous that they resorted to threatening anyone who dared question any part of this fragile edifice with 'fates worse than death'.

Only when we question everything do we have a chance to discover the truths about who and what we are. We cannot predict, in advance of our interrogations, where we will find the most important assumptions, or what they will be. Therefore we must look everywhere, and challenge everything. We cannot afford to treat any assumption as harmless or insignificant. It is most likely these that are the most important to our quest.

Further, we must remember that the beneficiaries of the status quo, the dominant hegemonic order will use all their powers to prevent us from revealing the truth. Should you reveal the truth, they will use all their powers to prevent you sharing that truth. Of course the greater your share in their power and privileges, the less likely you are to 'rock the boat' yourself. You don't have to actually benefit as such, you merely have to believe that you benefit, or will benefit one day, to allow yourself to be seduced, to cooperate, to become a 'mitlaufer' in their 'social reality'.

Promoting the evolution of our legal culture and our wider culture

Our present modes of discourse, of argument, can be most clearly seen in our legal systems. Our legal systems are set up on the principle of antagonistic 'players' seeking to prove themselves right, and their opponent wrong, totally independent of the truth, and the interests of natural justice. This means that interlocutors withhold information or arguments which might aid their 'opponents' or jeopardize their own 'position'.

This attack and defense is based on the principle of merely seeking to prove yourself right, and to prove your opponent wrong, in a combative arena. No-one is seeking the truth, they are merely seeking to win an argument. The quest for truth is not served by such a process, and hence the quest for justice will never be served by such a legal system. Lawyers are required to defend their clients even when they know their clients are guilty. They cannot share information with their 'adversary'. Sharing this information, information which would serve the interests of natural justice, might jeopardize them winning their case.

A fundamental change in our culture of argument is a prerequisite to an optimal society. This change would ultimately be reflected in a new legal system. In this system the players would work together to seek to find the truth, rather than attack or defend someone. We need to change the whole way we go about 'debating' arguments, and making decisions.

We must learn a co-operative approach in which we debate points of view and possible explanations and theories about things, and events, focusing on the intrinsic merits of arguments, rather than on defending or attacking positions. People should be praised for how well they contributed to the process of finding the truth, rather than be applauded for defeating an opponent, independent of the truth, independent of the interests of natural justice.

Our whole system of interactions have come to be dominated by competition of one form or another, with winners and losers. The aim has become to win, to beat the opponent, rather than to generate the best outcomes possible. We must replace competitive debate with constructive, creative dialog. We must introduce processes of collaboration to replace competition. The objective must become the production of the most transparent and compelling argument possible, rather than 'winning' some argument. We should not be lazy and smug. We should employ all our resources in our search for the optimal solutions to our problems.

We should not however overlook the benefit of the current system. In theory someone will be acting as if they believe the innocent defendant is innocent, and someone will be acting as if the guilty defendant is guilty, if you get my point. At least one of them will be right, and therefore actively serving the interests of justice.

The problem that might arise in a collaborative approach is where no-one was convinced the guilty defendant was guilty or the innocent defendant was innocent, as the case may be, and therefore no one actively defended the innocent, or actively prosecuted the guilty. In this case there is no guarantee that at least one of the legal counsel are actively seeking 'justice' for the defendant.

We must ensure, under a cooperative approach, that we actively consider any and all arguments and evidence that might suggest a guilty or an innocent verdict. We have to play the 'devil's advocate' in the absence of having at least one legal counsel who is in principle dedicated exclusively to protecting the innocent, or prosecuting the guilty. We must apply this principle to all public debate about all public issues.

We must ensure that we are actively seeking out all the possible arguments for and against. We must play devil's advocate, or wear the 'black' thinking hat of De Bono, even when we are all for something, and wear the positive thinking hat even when we are all against something. John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) apparently first proposed this idea, however I first got it by way of Walter Lippmann.

Wisdom, meaning, and specious sophistry

Taken out of the context in which it was embedded, and which ultimately gives it its meaning, any idea or phrase can be forced into another context, and ascribed another meaning to the one originally intended. By selectively reporting on someone's words and deeds, or on an event or experience, by omitting some things, embellishing others, and basically inventing others, you can 'construct' a totally misleading picture of that person, event, or experience. However enough of the 'unabridged' reality will remain for the new total to appear to be an authentic, accurate portrayal of that person, event, or experience.

We have to be careful always to seek to comprehend the original context within which things were said, or in which events took place, in order to comprehend the intended or real meaning of things that were said, done, or took place.

It is only when they perceive a personal advantage or benefit that most people open up to new ideas and ways of defining and relating. Even where people are aware of what how their best interests are served in the long run, they desire immediate satisfactions over longer term benefits, or are merely incapable of disciplining themselves. This explains in part the appeal of strong authority figures.

Specious sophistry is about twisting and distorting, selectively omitting and including. It is about narrowly defining, taking things out of context and selectively omitting and presenting bits of the context in which things were originally embedded. It is about inventing things, embellishing things, and ascribing meanings, intentions, and motives to people and events, to present them in a particular way that suits some particular person's or lobby-groups' purposes, rather than the quest for truth and transparency. It is like narrowly focusing a beam of light on a misrepresentative sample of a population. It is akin to the 'smoke and mirrors' of the illusionist, and the sleight of hand of the magician.

In one episode of the animated television series 'The Simpsons', Police Chief Quiggins has a display for the Springfield Medieval fair which contains an 'Esquilux'. This fantastic creature is, the police chief informs us, 'a horse with the body of a hare and, (wait for it), the head of a hare.' He also has that rarest of creatures, a two headed dog, (wait for it) born with only one head! What a master of spin he is.

People want to be able to define themselves as 'good' and caring people, without having to do anything to justify this definition, without having to risk any privileges or benefits. If we can deny that any problem exists, or that we have the ability to respond, responsibility, then we can deny any obligation to respond. In fact most of our social problems, the source of most of our problems per se, could be addressed, simply by living according to the sorts of principles most of us already claim to subscribe to.

Many conflicts as mere artifacts of how we define things

Decision making based on principles of holistically informed consent and compelling argument can provide an efficacious arena for the articulation and resolution of conflicts, and transform, even 'evaporate' many conflicts currently considered insoluble. Many conflicts are merely artifacts of poorly formulated arguments, false assumptions, poor logic, and the efforts of lobby groups to obfuscate and mystify the situation. Most conflicts merely revolve around whose dogma is superior, and about the distribution of costs and benefits.

Many conflicts which relativists will necessarily define as endemic, are merely a function of dogma, and dissolve with the elimination of dogma. This frees up our energies for tackling 'real' endemic conflicts, those arising out of the 'Pareto-efficient' non-synergistic nature of our world, the fact that a benefit to one party often comes at a cost to another. These endemic conflicts of interest thus concern the distribution of costs and benefits, with each political actor seeking to burden the other with as many costs as possible, while accumulating as many benefits for themselves.

Often the actors in these interactions are employed agents of lobby groups. Thus they are pursuing the interest of those that are paying them. Lobbying is a hugely lucrative industry which lacks transparency. It is often impossible to determine who is representing whose interests and how. The political deals that are made are complex, torpid, and secret. Politics is the negotiation of meanings, with the intention of gaining the most favorable distribution of costs and benefits possible in a non-synergistic world.

The distribution of power determines who the distribution of costs and benefits

Ultimately these interactions determine who will be compelled to produce value, and who will get to consume it. What most people are unaware of is that decisions which impose massive costs on the general population also provide massive benefits for a narrow minority of beneficiaries. Few people are able to penetrate the complex web of lobbying and special interest groups to be able to identify who benefits from particular decisions, how, and to what extent. The facts are often unlikely and surprising for the average person.

Remember that according to accepted psychological profiling measures, many of the world's most successful and powerful people are 'sociopaths'. They either feel no empathy for others, or manage to numb it. They act in relation to other humans as most humans act in relation to other animals. Think about how we exploit our power Vis a Vis animals, and you have defined the attitude of the most powerful individuals in our society towards the rest of us. They focus on the benefits they can gain, without any interest in the costs they impose on others. If they can make a hundreds of millions of dollars from the suffering and death of millions of people, then logically they will. The 'cost-benefit' analysis is compelling. They will, like any feudal lord, keep the rank and file in line by allowing benefits to 'trickle-down' to them, and hence buy their loyalty. Personal profit is, for these people 'just-cause' enough for any war.

In everyday decision making the same cost-benefit calculations apply. People do not behave on principle, they behave according to their perceived vested interests. Nuclear power plant owners are more willing to accept the risks associated with such power generation if they live thousands of kilometers upwind and upstream from the plants. As long as they are unlikely to be among the victims, as long as the benefits of lower petrol prices are paid for by others, car drivers will be in favor of 'oil wars'. The same pedestrian or cyclist that is appalled by the lack of caution and consideration car drivers take vis a vis vulnerable pedestrians and cyclists, will go on to behave in exactly the same way, once they find themselves, as drivers, equally invulnerable, behind the wheel, and a tonne of sheet-metal.

The steps involved in resolving conflicts

Conflict resolution is holistic rather than a linear. Conflict resolution is a fluid, open-ended process defined by constant re-iteration.

The conflict must first be defined or articulated. This definition will be continually refined and clarified iteratively as the conflict resolution proceeds, producing ever greater transparency. The real definition of the conflict, the real problems, may not be evident until the resolution process has been re-iterated many times.

The values and assumptions implicit in and underlying the conflict must be articulated, and made explicit. Again, the process of articulation is re-iterative. As we go through the process these values will become more clearly articulated, and assumptions will be revealed, interrogated, and revised or rejected.

We must generate evaluation criteria to determine what a resolution of the conflict could look like. Again these criteria will evolve with continual re-iteration of the entire process. The process may reveal that what looked like necessary properties in a 'solution' in the beginning, are in fact unimportant, while new criteria may emerge. These criteria, like all of the other elements in the conflict resolution process, must be seen as tentative, and open to constant revision.

As Marshall said, 'The plan is nothing, the planning is everything'. We need to have a vision of what the solution might look like, but we must be wary of becoming fixated on it. Our vision must be plastic, and flexible. We shouldn't simply head for a fixed predetermined destination. We must be flexible enough to change direction where the process reveals a more desirable destination. The process must always be seen as open-ended.

When we enter the process of conflict resolution we must focus on the process, rather than on fixed objectives. Our motivation is to optimize our interactions and relationships, rather than win some prize, cunningly defeat some enemy, or even 'compromise'. Conflict resolution is about holistic optimisation, rather than 'compromise'.

We need to be constantly 'brainstorming' potential visions of what the optimal outcomes of the process might look like. Again this must be done continually and re-iteratively, reflecting the constant evolution and development of the whole process towards an optimal holistic outcome. We must identify the potential referents whose interests will be considered in the cost-benefit analyses. We must identify every participant in the process, those directly and actively involved in the process, and those who are more passively, vertically and horizontally integrated in the process. All referents must be given a 'voice'. The interests of every potential referent must be considered. The 'externalities' of decisions must be calculated for any referent who may benefit or pay as a result of our proposed, potential decisions.

Some externalities are positive. Spending on armaments and formula one often have positive 'spin-offs' for the general population, often in unanticipated and subtle ways. A factory produces 'value' to be consumed, but it can also produce toxic pollution and destroy the 'ecological services' provided by the environment. Ecological services refer to the services that nature provide for us. One way to cost these is to determine how much it would cost to replicate these services artificially. Such services include the purification of water by forests, marshes, and mangroves.

Mangroves also provide the spawning grounds for a massive range of marine life, including those that are commercially fished and harvested. Mangroves are the also most efficient absorbers of CO₂ of all the plants known. Of course all trees absorb CO₂. In fact 20% of all CO₂ production is due to deforestation. Rain-forests also produce radical OH that purifies the earth's atmosphere. Insects pollinate plants, break-down dead plants, animals and excrement into humus, producing soil. These services are traditionally not 'priced' into economic models, or effectively priced at zero. However when we destroy the basis of such ecological services, by destroying ecosystem sustainability, we are consuming nature's capital.

One group is often compelled to bear the costs, the burdens, while another group consumes the benefits. The group that benefits will obviously try to persuade the groups that bear the costs that the factory is in everyone's interests. The beneficiaries will try to underplay the costs, and exaggerate the benefits. The not-yet-conceived have

no voice in this negotiation. The current generation tend force future generations to pay for the benefits the current ones enjoy. We consume nature's capital, leaving future generations poorer. We consume their inheritance. We leave them a negative legacy.

We must actively seek to reveal the true costs and benefits, and their distributions. We need to rigorously interrogate the situation, and inform all the referents of their real interests, of the costs and benefits they stand to gain and suffer, and to impose on others, including their own children. We cannot allow one group to mystify other groups, to deny the entire population of referents an awareness of their real interests in the process.

Not all referents will be obvious. Often it is only after many re-iterations of the process that the actual referents are revealed, exposed, identified, and can be informed, and invited to participate in the process. All potential referents must be informed in a way that empowers their meaningful participation in the process. They need to be informed and aware, so they can give or withhold their 'informed consent'. The interests of every conceivable 'referent' must be considered. Great efforts must be made to identify these referents, and to integrate them into the process.

This process will require the leadership of competent and impartial mediators. The job of the mediators will be to keep the process moving in productive directions.

As a rule or principle, no decision can be considered valid or legitimate without the participation and informed consent of every referent who has an interest in the outcomes of this process. No conflict can be considered 'resolved' where any referent has been excluded and denied the opportunity to participate in the entire process.

No part of the process can be held in secret. The aim of the process is to produce as much holistic transparency as possible. The aim of the process is to define a resolution with the optimal outcomes for every actor with a vested interest.

The process must be defined by the principle: 'No-one wins unless everyone wins'. No mystifying obfuscating notions of 'the greater good' can be allowed to corrupt the equity and justice of the process. The only referents must be individuals. The interests of any particular individual must be considered equal to those of any other. In this way the obscene notion of 'sacrificing the good of the few for the benefit of the many' will be abandoned. Only an individual can suffer or benefit. A group is a concept. It is not a thing that can experience pleasure or pain, cost or benefit. We must eliminate the corruption that such 'discourses' produce in the popular language culture, and hence the culture itself.

We must be wary of how the hegemonic system of relations and the popular language culture re-iteratively and reflexively produce and re-produce each other in subtle and intricate ways. No society can define itself as just, as worthy of re-production, where it plays with language to justify the torturing of animals for 'the greater good'. Killing one person to 'save' a thousand, is murder. The 'thousand' do not exist as a sentient being. The thousand are merely 1000 individuals. The 'sacrifice' of one person is simply the judgment that that individual has less right to live than any one of the 1000 individuals. To argue anything else is obfuscation and mystification.

Of course in our culture the language has been insidiously and ubiquitously corrupted by such concepts or 'discourses' as, 'the good of the many'. I recommend you read Ursula Leguin's 'Those that walk away from Omelas'. It may be more compelling than my philosophical utterances.

In defining or articulating the conflict, we have to refer to the values and assumptions underlying the conflict. We begin at the surface by clarifying what each participant believes to be the problem, how they personally 'conceive' of the problem. This is often revealed in their immediate definition of what outcomes they would prefer, and therefore define as a solution. Often the articulation of desirable outcomes provides the most accurate and precise information about the real nature of the conflict. What is originally articulated as a conflict of religion often reveals itself to be a conflict of economic interests.

The conflict may turn out to be more about questions of 'how' than 'what'. So we begin defining the situation from the participant's points of view.

We must determine whether the conflict is about the immediate situation, or if it is really part of an ongoing conflict. If so, the resolution of the immediate conflict will only be a temporary treatment of symptoms rather than a cure of the chronic problem. We need to interrogate the participants to get a full picture of the situation.

We need to keep in mind that we cannot rely on the participants being able to fully articulate their own situation. We need to look for clues, ask third parties, and check records. Given that most people behave unprincipledly, we cannot even trust the participants. We have to give them the impression we do, to encourage co-operation, but we must remain sober to the reality that people lie and cheat to pursue and to secure their perceived vested interests.

We must keep independent counsel. We need to penetrate the situation, to interrogate the parties, to help them articulate how they perceive their vested interests, and to help them evaluate how valid these perceptions are. By enlightening participants as to the true nature of their interests, much unnecessary conflict can be avoided. Think about the conflict between the villagers, insecure about their future harvests, the priests whose privileges are based on securing favorable harvests, and the virgins who are to be sacrificed to this end!

Conflict resolution is not about compromise. It is about interrogating belief systems and situations. It is about optimizing outcomes. It is about getting to the sources of the real conflicts of interests. To clarify this statement we shall consider the issue of smoking.

It is in everyone's interests to ban smoking. Smokers would prefer to beat their addiction, improve their health, and save money. They are, however, drug addicts, and addicted to the 'social benefits', the 'definitions' attached to smoking, as produced by multi-billion dollar marketing campaigns including unobtrusive conditioning via product placements. As such they are weak, and naturally seek the easier path of defending their behavior. In conventional thinking, the problem is real, between real preferences, and so a compromise is seen as the solution. By defining the interests as real, only a compromise can resolve the situation. This compromise is allowing smokers to smoke in designated areas.

In fact there is no conflict of interests. Both smokers and non-smokers would prefer that smoking be banned. In the smoking example, interrogation provides information, and reason a solution. The solution, however, needs to be imposed on an apparently 'unwilling' or 'hostile' group of participants in the apparent conflict.

Conventional relativistic thinking focuses on the right to smoke versus the right not to have to smoke, with each 'right' or 'preference' equally weighted. A more informed approach evaluates or 'judges' the real value of particular preferences. In this case the preference for an environment free of tobacco smoke is 'superior' to the preference to be allowed to feed an addiction and to poison ourselves and others in the process. The conventionally mystifying arguments dissolve under interrogation. In fact there is no real conflict of interests.

Social responsibility is weighted heavily against an individual's freedom or right to hurt others. There should never have been a tobacco 'debate'. There was in fact nothing to 'debate'. The 'debate' is extremely revealing of human nature and the nature of the social interaction it iteratively and reflexively produces and is reinforced by.

We can't rely on the participants in a conflict to determine for themselves valid criteria for evaluating potential solutions to the conflict. We do, however, need to be clear about what they would value in a particular solution, in the event that a real conflict of interests does exist.

At present, we operate under a hegemony where it is still 'politically incorrect' to qualitatively differentiate between the value of options. Under our representative governing systems, the idea that each person's judgment is not equally valuable is unpopular. To 'judge' one thing as qualitatively 'better' than another is to draw criticism of being paternalistic or dictatorial. We do not like to be told that others know better than we do. The human ego responds aggressively to being told that others have a right to tell us what to do because we ourselves cannot be trusted to make the right decisions. However few people have sound and reliable judgment skills.

Under the hegemony of 'relativism', holistically enlightened reason is not valued any higher than unenlightened selfish impulse. Although in practice it is acceptable to judge people as they apply for jobs, it is still unacceptable to rank persons in order of intellectual competence in everyday life. No-one wants to be defined as

inferior in public, even if in private they feel inferior, and happily define almost everyone else as inferior to themselves.

We seem capable of submitting that another person can run faster than us, but unable to submit that others are generally more intelligent than us, and therefore should be allowed to make judgments for us, and impose them on us. This is despite the fact that most human social advance has occurred as a result of a minority imposing law and order on an unwilling or at least reluctant majority.

Of course paternalism is positive or negative depending on the principles and holistic intelligence of those imposing judgments. A brilliant, competent, compassionate, enlightened dictator, driven by principled decision making, will of course produce superior outcomes than a representative democracy defined by corruption, incompetence, and pandering to the balance of narrow vested interests and their professional lobby groups. Lobbyists are professional 'disingenuous specious sophists'.

This is of course a very challenging statement. I am not recommending dictatorship. I am recommending the production of a culture in which all participants are competent, compassionate, enlightened, and driven by principled decision making. It is a fact, however, that human progress has always been defined by a minority imposing what are, at least initially, unpopular decisions and regulations upon a reluctant, at worst antagonistic, but more often than not merely passive, majority.

History shows that people tend to acquiesce to regulation if it is in fact reasonable, based on compelling arguments. Thus while the majority opposed the introduction of laws requiring the wearing of seat-belts, most people comply with them. Sadly Princess Di felt that the laws of physics only applied to 'others', and we have lost her, among thousands of others.

Is it ever appropriate to sacrifice the good of the few for 'the many'?

Usually when people appeal to 'the general good' they are really referring to their own disguised self-interests. The beneficiary classes define the good of the community as whatever suits themselves. They have the power to have these definitions enforced as the social reality. Everyone would enforce definitions that suited their own interests if they had the power to. This is what politics is about. Everyone seeks to have a definition of reality naturalized which suits their own interests.

However the question is still valid. Given informed consent before the event, are there any conditions under which we *would*, in advance, decide that it was appropriate to sacrifice the interests of the few in the name of protecting 'society'?

Assuming we implemented some technical version of Rawls' 'veil of ignorance', or everyone believed in random reincarnation, and thus we could not know in advance to which group we belonged, those who would have their interests sacrificed, or those who stood to benefit from this, is there any situation in which we would vote for such a sacrifice?

If statistically we could expect to save the lives of 1 million people, by killing 100 people, would we agree, generically, in advance of the situation arising, and without any way to know whether we were more likely to belong to the 100 'sacrificed' or the 1 million beneficiaries of that sacrifice, to such a 'trade-off'?

This is not a game. You have no way to pretend anything here. You can not 'weasel' your way out of a response. You cannot secretly work out to which group you will belong, and then construct some argument to rationalize your emotional position, your self-interest, in the name of some 'principles'. This is all that happens in most political discourses. Here, now, you will have to decide without being able to seek your particular interests, without acting in a way that serves everyone's interests, as individuals, and as the general beneficiaries of 'society'.

Here, now, you cannot have your cake and eat it too. You cannot calculate your probably personal cost-benefit. You can only calculate the general cost-benefits. Is society as we know it worth you risking being sacrificed by it, for it? Normally you have a good idea, as a member of the privileged, powerful beneficiary classes, whether you really risk being among the 100. You could then reasonably see that it will be someone else that is sacrificed. Then you can pretend that, based on principle, you believe that it is logical, reasonable, and fair, to sacrifice the 100. That is how most 'arguments' proceed. People have a good idea whether they stand to benefit or pay from a decision. In my case you cannot predict this. I am going to hook you all up to lie detectors too, so don't dissemble and waste my time.

Or am I on the wrong track. Is it better to let things take their course, for want of any better alternative? So we may ask what alternative is there? Well, my point is that in most cases there are alternatives which are never presented to the public, because the ones that are offered serve the narrow vested interests of the beneficiary classes. It may well be that opportunistic competition is the ideal. Certainly communism is not human nature. If humans are unable to be motivated by 'moderation' and only find the opportunity to power and privilege, not matter how self-deceptive people are in their evaluation of their chances of getting it, then perhaps 'survival of the fittest' is the optimal policy.

What I am trying to offer, with TROONATNOOR, 'Convergences' and 'Religion', and most specifically my 'Optimal Ethics Generator', is holistically informed consent for everyone, even the not-yet-conceived. What people chose is, like evolution itself, an open-question. There is no perfect solution in this world. Anyone who claims to have one should first counter all my arguments before wasting our time.

Traditional conflict resolution

The traditional means of resolving conflict can be defined as 'Might is Right'. Vested interests compete by the use of force. 'Let god decide the issue' expresses the pseudo 'moral' aspect of this method. The victor is defined by victory, which god must have ordained. If god didn't want that outcome, then he wouldn't have 'allowed' it. Of course this 'legitimation' is entirely nominal, internal, reflexive, and self-serving. There is absolutely nothing compelling about it unless you assume that a god exists, takes an interest in such matters, and concerns itself with concepts like justice.

In the conventional hegemonic social reality of the day, this legitimized the outcome, and the victor's use of barbaric force to coerce compliance with their will. It also helped to have god's spokesperson on earth, such as a Pope, define the outcome as their god's will. Compliance was in any case a necessity, given the victor's power to enforce it. The endurance of the 'new order' depended thereafter on either a continual enforcement by force, or the 'legitimation' of the order in the minds of its subjects.

William the Conqueror gained military power in Angle-Saxon England in 1066, then replaced Saxon noblemen and other authorities with Norman ones loyal to him. The feudal system he introduced normalized and naturalized the Norman Conquest, and legitimated Norman ways of defining things, including Norman rule. Of course the Bayeux tapestry is a wonderful work of propaganda, aimed at legitimating the Norman Conquest of Angle-Saxon England. William had the support of the Pope, who offered any French soldier or mercenary forgiveness for any sins, including rape and murder, committed during the invasion. This pope sanctioned the war and William's right to the throne of England.

William was not religious, but as a pragmatist recognized the power of the church to legitimate his grab for power and privilege. England was the best administered and therefore most wealthy kingdom in Europe at that time. William supported the Catholic Pope and so this Pope supported him. William employed pure terror and butchery to assert his right to the throne. He employed religion to motivate his soldiers and mercenaries, and to politically legitimate his rule.

The majority (is usually wrong) rule versus the rule of reason

Relying on might is right is an ever narrowing option, as ever greater destructive power becomes increasingly available to ever smaller organizations. Relatively minor paramilitary organizations are becoming more and more able to threaten global security, so majority rule or mere competitive democracy as a means to resolving conflicts will become increasingly problematic.

Those in the 'minority' who are compelled to submit to majority rule by the State's monopoly on violence may reject both the majority rule and the legitimacy of that State's monopoly. They may simply employ violence to assert their rights to self-rule. The efficacious means of employing 'terror' to assert independence have become increasingly available, while the political systems which seek to legitimate majority rule are becoming increasingly corrupt and unaccountable, and hence losing their legitimacy, their 'moral' right to rule. They can no longer appeal to the Pope or his god for legitimacy.

Many people have seen through the ridiculous notion of waiting until after death for justice. They will demand it now, and employ the same means that the State employs, violence and the threat of violence, to get the State to address their 'minority' grievances.

Majority rule is, in any case, not 'morally' sound, as the majority is usually wrong. Government rule based on pandering to a majority that seeks its narrowly perceived self-interests breeds relativism and popularism rather than quality of judgment and enlightened, holistic, principled decision making. Relativism refutes the very notion of right and wrong. This is the fundamental 'Yfel' of democracy, the refutation of the potential superiority of one argument over another. I use an older English version of 'evil' in its original context free of Catholic dogma, as something 'not-good'.

Majority rule refutes the very notion of compelling argument by replacing qualities such as ethics, intellectual rigor, transparency, enlightenment, and compellingness, with mere quantities of voters, and money, to fund lobby groups and political campaigns. Democracy promotes competition amongst narrow vested interest groups, rather than quality decision making in the interests of the entire population. Democracy promotes decision making based on socio-economic and political power, rather than on the basis of enlightened, holistic, compelling arguments. Very little principled decision making ever occurs in the democratically elected parliaments. Too many things work against it.

Most people would deride anyone who even considered the possibility of principled decision making in parliament as naive and totally unrealistic. However if we were to limit voting to persons who could demonstrate the ability to consider everyone's interests, and who could demonstrate their critical reasoning skills, then we would have a higher quality decision making system.

Over time as more and more people learned the skills of decision making, and the general level of enlightened holistic intelligence in the population rose, more and more people would be given the right to vote. At some point it could be anticipated that virtually everyone would possess the necessary attributes to contribute to informed decision making. At this stage true Athenian style democracy could emerge, with each citizen contributing directly to decision making in their society, rather than merely relying on elected 'representatives' to make decisions for them.

Of course democracy is not an end in itself. Socrates was condemned to death by the Athenian democracy. It is the quality of the judgment of those participating in democracy that lifts the 'mob' or 'majority (is usually wrong) rule' into the heights of informed, principled decision making.

The rule of 'public opinion' merely the rule of the beneficiary classes

At present we vote for representatives who make laws which we have to comply with independent of our personal judgments. Lobby groups use their power to promote their narrow vested interests at the cost of the general Public's interests. They also use their power to produce and control discourses in the media. They more or less feed the public its 'opinions'. They then report and cleverly promote this 'public opinion' in polls and surveys, and through 'pay for comment' radio and television presenters, to reassure the public that its opinion are in fact shared by the majority.

Over a hundred years ago Schopenhauer recognized that: 'there is no opinion, however absurd, which men will not readily embrace as soon as they can be brought to the conviction that it is generally adopted.' You only have to make everyone believe that everyone else believes something, and most people will 'go along with' it' (mit-laufen). Few people are willing to risk being, or even appearing to be, the odd one out. It is an example of 'collective ignorance'. Few will risk challenging or questioning the 'public opinion' they are presented with. Most people will consume it passively, as a 'fait accompli'. In this way such 'opinion' can become entrenched in the hegemonic system and social reality, and become 'self-evident' or taken for granted. This is another reason why the majority are usually wrong.

Few people ever realize that they have been made into puppets for the most influential elites in their society. They are reassured to find that the 'State' is acting on their own, the *Public's*, opinions. It is comforting for them to think they have the power. After all, the State is doing what the majority, as reflected in the public opinion polls, want. At least that is how it 'seems' and for most people, how it seems is how it is. This is the nature of hegemony and social reality.

Pay for comment; towards greater transparency in our media

Radio station announcers and television presenters are on the payrolls of big companies. They routinely receive payments of over \$100,000 to say good things about their sponsor. They perform a public relations and propaganda role. It is a form of subliminal advertising. Remember that subliminal advertising in its original form of unobtrusive, unconscious, milli-second ads, is technically illegal. 'Pay for comment' is an invidious, insidious, and highly 'effective' form of product placement.

The reason it is so effective is that it is a paid endorsement masquerading as a personal opinion. The radio hosts and television presenters have great influence with their audiences. When they present a paid product or organizational endorsement as their own opinion it has greater influence and impact than a mere overtly paid for advertisement. When a sporting hero participates in a television commercial we are aware that they are being paid for their endorsement. We are likely to be less receptive, and a little skeptical. Where the star appears to be merely expressing their own opinion, the endorsement is more compelling.

If a sporting hero has always worn Nike, even before they got a business manager to arrange lucrative product endorsement deals, then we believe that Nike gear must have something going for it. We respect the tastes and opinions of people based on their professional background and so on. It is the difference between the Michelin guide and a pop-star endorsing some brand of fast food.

By the way, I wear size 45, if anyone from Nike marketing is reading this!

When you recommend a product or organization to a friend, the endorsement is authentic, and genuine. We are more likely to be swayed by such an endorsement where it is voluntary, and given with good intentions. We are usually much more careful if we believe that the person making a recommendation has a personal vested interest in lobbying for the product or organization. This is one reason why product placements are so effective and so coveted.

If Tom Cruise, or more to the point, *Top Gun*, wears a particular brand of sunglasses, a particular brand of jeans, and a particular brand of cola or bourbon, then these products, gain popular appeal via association with that character, and they become very coveted consumer brands. Ask a marketing expert what happened to sales of those products after the release of 'Top Gun'. As the producers of that movie how much revenue their product placements earned them.

We must demand transparency of our media personalities. If they are making paid endorsements, then we have a right to know. If they are making comments because they are being paid to make those sorts of comments, then we have a right to know.

Given his illegal participation in 'pay for comment', the name of one particular radio announcer and cult figure is just a little ironic, hey John? Though I do agree with him about making car windows bigger to allow greater visibility and increase 'passive' safety.

Remember that they put all those television commercial actors in white 'lab coats' to look like dentists, doctors, and scientists, when selling you toothpaste or hair 'rejuvenation' products. Alternatively they find someone who looks like a respectable, successful housewife, to 'spruik' for their washing powders and cleaning products. And what about all those 'scientific' looking graphs and 'simulations'. You may think you're not that gullible, but in reality the 'authority transfer' is more or less subliminal. No matter how clever you are, it comes in under your 'intelligence-radar'.

The hardest job for marketing people is to 'get your attention'. This is why television advertisements often have bigger budgets than many films. They are mini-films. Marketers need a 'captive' audience. You're more likely to pay attention to your favorite television personality, or sympathetic housewife. Of course some of the most creative people work in advertising, and their ads are often very entertaining and amusing. It's a pity that what they are promoting often has little if any real value, and often even negative value. And imagine what real value the resources dedicated to such ads could be employed in producing. Think of all the things 'there's no money for'.

You may be interested to know that the term 'soap-opera' actually comes from the fact that the first television serial dramas were openly sponsored by soap powder companies. During the drama the actors would 'take a break' to promote that companies washing powders and so on. At least the whole marketing thing was transparent. It didn't make it any less effective though. The 'status' or 'sympathy' transfer from the television personalities made the products, subliminally and consciously, more attractive.

Rejecting non-compelling assumptions

For discussion to be productive, there must be a fluidity in the process of rejecting assumptions and arguments that are not compelling. To facilitate this, a culture must develop in which being wrong is seen as the next step to being right. After all, once we accept we were wrong, and transform our beliefs, we become right. Recognizing that we were wrong needs to become defined as a success, rather than a failure. This is a long-term socialization-educational process. This requires a cultural transformation.

Submitting to a competing definition of things does not come easy to humans. Defense of dogma and 'conventional wisdom' is more common than the open acceptance of compelling arguments. There are many reasons for this, least not sheer convenience. Humans generally focus on their rights rather than their responsibilities. They defend their right to believe what they want to. They are happy to use any specific information they can get about their competition to their own advantage, but they are loathe to promote transparency in general.

Both parties engaged in an argument or position often rely on the same assumptions, conventions, and dogmas, to make their case. They share an interest in socially 'legitimizing' mystifying, obstrucificationist forms of argument. Both sides commit the same sins. All the participants in the dominant discourses are equally dependent on having non-compelling, non-rigorous assumptions and methods 'validated' and 'legitimated'.

None of the conventional 'players' have any vested interest in interrogating the most important foundations of each other's arguments. Each knows that its own arguments would lose all credibility if the underlying, hegemonically 'naturalized', taken for granted, implicit assumptions and conventions of argument were interrogated. The conventional, sub-optimal, unproductive, often destructive ways of 'arguing' and of 'conflict resolution' are the result of these mutually tolerated and re-produced forms of 'reason(s)ing'.

Relativism

Under relativism and popularism, all individuals feel they have an equal right to decision making, as their personal judgments are just as good as anyone else's. Relativism is an ideology that allows people to deny the qualitative or moral superiority of any argument. It defines any particular assumption as a mere 'position'. It defines all 'positions' as equally valid or legitimate. It denies the superiority of intellectual rigor and compelling argument. It postulates 'scientific method' as merely one form of method, no more or less valid or legitimate than alternative forms of argument.

Ultimately relativism, in the form of 'cultural relativism' denies the notion of superior and inferior. Relativism criticizes us for trying to 'impose' our arguments and ethics on others. We are denied the opportunity to refer to how compelling or otherwise an argument or ethic is. Under such a system, a fatuous argument is given the same 'weight' as an intellectually rigorous and compelling one. This is democracy applied to reason and logic.

The popular culture of relativism allows individuals to defend their beliefs and the narrow self-interests they inform. Under a culture of relativism they have no need to justify themselves, even to themselves. Under this culture defending the right to be 'wrong' is normal. It is even considered politically incorrect, to seek to have intellectual rigor adopted by those who do not subscribe to the 'scientific' method. Most people cherish their own brand of dogma. They may accept scientific method and compelling argument in their professional lives, but they will insist on the right to subscribe to, and indoctrinate their children in, fatuous and damaging dogma, in their private lives.

It is still legal to emotionally and psychologically abuse children with dogma and lies. In an enlightened society, teaching children that they are 'sinners', that sex is sinful, that the expression of authentic sexuality, including same sex attraction, will damn them to an eternity in hell, would be defined as child abuse, and appropriate steps would be taken to eliminate such practices. There is nothing 'harmless' about the dogma of the various bibles. It is a form of violence that has yet to be legally defined as such. Few people would defend the right to teach children Nazi doctrine. A critical analyses of the various bibles will show that the dogma and doctrines expressed in our major religions are equally despicable, and in fact lack any of the more redeeming features of Nazism.

We must be careful not to throw the baby out with the bathwater. More reasonable people reject the racist, genocidal, exploitationist ideology of the bible, and focus on the more productive and positive aspects of the bible, just as reasonable people would reject the similar aspects of Nazism, while salvaging the positive. Please, read your bible before you allow your knee-jerk reaction to close your mind to what I have just expressed.

A reasonable, informed person will not subscribe to any dogma, Catholic or Nazi. Of course the Catholics must to some extent tolerate the Nazis, as the Nazis must tolerate the Catholics. Each must defend the other's 'right to be wrong'. Of course more people subscribe to Catholic dogma than will openly admit to sharing any of the ideals of the Nazis.

The Catholic Church certainly murdered an equally monstrous number of people as the Nazis did, defining them as 'witches', 'heretics', and 'pagans'. The Old Testament Jews laid all the ideological groundwork for the Nazis. The Old Testament Jews implemented their own ideologically based pogroms of genocide, theft, and rape. They enslaved entire nations. This is all proudly documented in your bible, if you care to read it and see. They legitimated their genocide and slavery as some god's will. Hitler's pogrom was legitimated by a similarly nationalistic and imperialistic ideology which had as its supreme legitimation 'historical destiny'. Moses' and the bibles' chosen people were the Jews. Hitler's and 'Mein Kampf's chosen people were the 'Aryans'.

Hitler had contempt for Catholicism as an ideology, but admired the Catholic Church's organizational structure, propaganda apparatus, and strict disciplining of its membership. Hitler is said to have modeled many of his organizational approaches on the organization of the Catholic Church, especially its countenance of zero dissidence, its zero tolerance of internal opposition, its tyrannical leadership style and its top-down organizational structure.

The transforming nature of eliminating invalid assumptions

No individual belief or assumption can be transformed without impacting on the whole system of beliefs and assumptions. Accepting a different assumption or belief may have severe consequences for the behaviors that it informed and culturally 'legitimated'. As a result of such transformations, people may need to sacrifice the satisfying beliefs, behaviors, and states of mind that the rejected assumptions and arguments informed, supported, and reflexively (nominally) 'validated' and 'legitimated'. People may be required to give up relationships of privilege, and the material and emotional benefits these brought.

People fight to protect their perceived vested interests. They can be relied upon to wage a 'dirty war' against anyone they perceive as representing a threat to these interests. Challenge a simple definition within the hegemonic discourses and you threaten the entire discourse, and the hegemony of the ruling social reality and its distribution of privileges and benefits. It might seem like a mere gesture to you, to seek to have a compelling argument validated. In fact it is a supremely threatening act to anyone 'in bed with' (em-bed-ed in), or who perceives that their interests are represented by, the dominant, hegemonic order.

The golden mean and optimisation

Extreme beliefs are often seductive in their apparent simplicity, demanding little by way of intellectual rigor or effort. We tend to maximize and minimize, rather than to optimize. We tend towards Dionysian hedonism, giving in to our every desire, or Platonic (Apollonian) austerity, denying and repressing every desire. People at both extremes of the hedonism-denial spectrum often experience discontent. When they do it is human nature for them to seek their happiness at the 'other' extreme' end of the spectrum. Priests will become profligate hedonists, and hedonists will 'escape' to a Zen Buddhist retreat or monastery, or go missionizing in the harshest of conditions, denying themselves all 'worldly' satisfactions.

It is not uncommon for hedonists to renounce pleasure, and to present themselves as 'proof' that the hedonistic lifestyle is not rewarding. This is comforting if you have no access to hedonistic pleasures, or feared seeking them due to the risks associated with doing so. You needn't feel you'd missed out on anything. You can feel smug and self-satisfied that you'd taken the 'direct' route to happiness, and 'avoided' the rough and rocky road of the hedonist.

In reality the extremes of hedonism and self-denial are both ultimately unsatisfying. It is ultimately the 'middle way', the path of moderation, the 'golden mean' that is the optimal. The problem is that the extremes seem to offer 'extreme' results. The middle way has its costs and benefits, its positives and negatives. We tend to imagine that there must be a 'perfect' life, one with exclusively 'good' experiences. We seek it in 'heaven', in 'detachment' and 'bliss', or in pleasure seeking. We seek a perfect condition that doesn't exist. We need to learn to accept the good and bad, the 'yin and yang' of existence, before we will 'settle' for moderation, the golden mean, and optimisation. 'Above all, moderation'. This is the hard earned wisdom of the ancients.

Anthropomorphism and anthropocentrism: appropriating exclusive ownership of properties

It is common to hear a person accuse someone of anthropomorphizing something, of ascribing it attributes which are human. This common formulation implicitly assumes that humans have properties and attributes unique to itself, such as emotions and intelligence. This implicit assumption is highly problematic, and therefore the notion of 'anthropomorphizing' something is also problematic. Humans have appropriated particular characteristics, qualities, or properties for themselves. These properties are in fact widely distributed among many other sentient living things. Sexism and racism continue this appropriation, claiming particular qualities as exclusive to particular sexes or 'races'. Anthropomorphism, sexism, and racism, have arisen out of systems of relations and definitions which nominally legitimate, justify, rationalize, explain, or excuse relationships of exploitation and inequality.

General human intelligence is exaggerated. Most of the progress of humanity has been produced by and inherited from a relatively few geniuses. It is these few who then define the whole of humanity as brilliant. Our advantage over other animals is that through communication we have the ability to re-produce and socially accumulate the products of occasional genius. Other animals can only pass innovation on through actual demonstration to each new generation of offspring. This does not, however, justify discounting the capacity of animals to develop their skills over generations, and narrowly defining all their behaviors as instinct. Whether we are considering combustion engines or nest and dam building techniques, technology is technology.

Ants and termites 'farm' a particular type of fungus which is only found in these 'farms'.

They feed the fungus, which they 'grow' in order to 'harvest' and eat, with a compost of dead leaves. Ant and termite farming surely pre-dates human farming practices. We have records of how human engineering has advanced over the ages. Unfortunately we have no such records of the development of bird, ant, or beaver engineering. Observations of the products of bird, ant, or beaver engineering, however, do justify consideration of the complexity of such engineering, and leaves one uncomfortable with defining it as purely instinctive. Alternatively, to be consistent, we would have to define human weaving and irrigation systems as purely instinctive actions, and not the results of conscious deliberation, learning, and intelligence.

Animals recognize relationships between things, which is the definition of intelligence, and have the capacity to utilize these observed relationships to manipulate the environment, the definition of technology. The popular or ruling hegemony, necessarily intrinsic to or reflexive of its own purposes, advances human technology as the only technology, and human intelligence as the only true intelligence, on this planet.

Of course the intelligence of females and non-Anglo-Saxons has, until relatively recently, also been defined as inferior. It was easy to maintain this definition by denying them a chance to become educated. Even white male serfs were denied the chance to learn to read and write, lest they challenge the definition of themselves as being 'worthy' of exploitation and subjugation. Their exploiters reconciled their exploitation of other humans by defining them as little more than animals. In fact they could define their own exploitation of them as 'fatherly'. The master could feel 'morally' good about his exploitation while enjoying the material benefits of that exploitation.

This is how language, how the popular hegemonic culture, allows the dominant participants to have their cake and eat it too. The discourses are all controlled by those dominating the culture. Relationships emerge from, and are reflexive of, the definitions which produce and re-produce the hegemony of the dominant actors in society.

The dominant actors define themselves as the 'morally' superior, the 'chosen' people, and define of non-members of the dominant groups as 'morally legitimate' targets of exploitation'. At one socio-historical point the dominant group might be Jews, exploiting non-Jews, murdering them, stealing their possessions, enslaving them, and raping them. At another point the Nazi's might be dominant, exploiting the Jews, stealing their wealth and enslaving them. The only principal operating is that of opportunism and the construction of an ideology that at least nominally legitimates and 'morally' sanctions the exploitation.

The Jews had their religion and leader, Moses, and the Nazi's had their 'secular religion', and their leader, Hitler. One tribe of Africans might consider another tribe inferior, and so attack and enslave them. Later, Europeans arrive and enslave that very same tribe of Africans, defining them as inferior. We shouldn't forget that many African tribes themselves engaged in the slave trade. It was customary throughout the entire world, in antiquity, to enslave the losers of tribal wars.

Tootsies referred to Hutus as 'cockroaches'. This made it easier to murder them. The Nazi's compared Jews to rats, denying them their humanity, and our empathy. When humans appropriate all the rights in the universe for themselves, they numb themselves to the suffering they inflict on animals. Nazism was a species of racism which is a species of 'might is right'. Species-ism refers to the denial of rights to animals, in the same way as racism denies particular rights to particular putative 'species'. The capacity to define someone or something as worthy of our consideration in cost-benefit analyses is the ultimate expression of our power over them. How we exercise this power defines how deserving we are of justice. It would be consistent with our own reason(s)ing to claim for any creature more intelligent and powerful than us the right to farm, eat, and vivisect us. Read 'Convergences' for more details.

Popular language *mis*-usage regarding, and the true nature of, creation

The concept of cause is closely related to that of creation. The notion of creation in popular language usage is that of creating something that was not there before. We shall now consider how valid this idea is. Let us call the basic constituents of the universe, the things that everything else is made of, primal properties, or primerties. The interaction of these primerties gives rise to the emergence of things with apparently new properties. Let us call these emergent properties, or propergents.

Propergents are the result of interactions, they are apparently new things, having properties that apparently do not exist in the things that are interacting. In any case they were not present before the interaction. They arose out of the interactions, however, and were not created, in the populist sense of the term. We can demonstrate conceptually how this works, showing at the same time how complexity can emerge from simplicity. Let us start with the absence of anything, and the presence of something.

Let us call these conditions or properties the numbers 0 and 1, nothing and something. Nothing is the space produced by interactions. Interactions represent change, and therefore produce time. So the interactions of primerties produce 'space-time' as a propergent. It is contemporaneously epiphenomenal. If the primerties cease interacting, then 'space-time' ceases to be reproduced. It doesn't have an independent existence like the primerties do.

Let us describe the interaction of two primerties as $1+1$. We now have the primerty 1, and the propergents 2, and space-time, a product of the interaction itself. Our propergent can now interact with the primerty, in this 'space-time', producing the propergent 3, and more space-time. $1+2=3$. If the process continues, it will produce an infinite set of new numbers and space-time. In this case the primerty had the property of combining with other primerties, and with the products, the outcomes, of this and other interactions. This process is determined by the algorithm of addition.

We should remember that all other algorithms, even the most apparently complex ones, are merely shorthand notations for variations of addition and its opposite, subtraction. 4×1 is shorthand for $1+1+1+1$.

Algorithms refer to the rules that govern interactions. An algorithm defines how things will interact, and therefore determines the nature of the interaction. Complexity develops as a function of the number and variety of interactions that take place, and the number and variety of algorithms defining these interactions. It must be remembered that the algorithms are properties of the primerties themselves. Thus when we include the summing as one of the parts, the whole is the sum of the parts. The process of summing is itself a quality. Thus $1 + 1$ is not merely the interaction of two 1's. It is the interaction between two 1's and an algorithm. This is why the whole does not reduce to the parts in the conventional sense, as the convention fails to recognize the algorithm itself as a part in the interaction. Now that we recognize the algorithm, we can see that the whole does reduce to its parts, two 1's and the algorithm. There is nothing mysterious here, unless you consider algorithms in the light of 'magic spells'.

Under particular interactions, different algorithms manifest and emerge in the interactions. These manifestations define the conditions for further interactions, and therefore their outcomes. Under particular conditions particular primerties will manifest particular properties. The ultimately unlimited number of combinations of primerties therefore allows for virtually unlimited diversity of outcomes. Interactions determine conditions which determine what latent properties of the primerty will be manifest. Diversity is in this sense mathematically simple.

The four letter code CTAG which constitutes our D.N.A demonstrates this process. Each four letter 'gene' interacts to produce an embryo. The same four letter genes interact to produce different properties depending on where they are located on the developing embryo. The same genes, depending on their location in the embryo and at what stage of the embryo's development they are present, will be expressed differently. Thus we get diversity from simplicity. This is known as embryology. It is noteworthy that all genetic information is binary, that is, a series of zeros and ones.

Once 1 and 1 have produced 2, the same basic algorithm that governed their interaction to produce 2, will produce 3. The process will continue until we have large numbers interacting with their earlier 'producers', that is, 1's. The outcome of the algorithm will be dependent upon what 'stage' of the evolution of 1's any particular 1 interacts with, say 3793, or 1. The product of the interaction will therefore be 2 or 3794. The same primerty will produce a different outcome dependent on the stage of 'evolution' of the interacting primerties. The interaction of primerties produces new interaction conditions which then define the products of the interactions, determining their nature, and their emergent properties.

In his 'Dialectics of Nature', Engels states, 'Probably the same gentlemen who up to now have decried the transformation of quantity into quality as mysticism and incomprehensible transcendentalism will now declare that it is indeed something quite self-evident, trivial, and commonplace, which they have long employed, and so they have been taught nothing new'. He may be referring to what I have been trying to express.

The primerty, maybe it is a quark, or maybe a quark is itself made up of something even more primal-elemental; produces hydrogen which fuels the fire of the sun, releasing heat energy as it fuses into the next element in the table of elements, the basis of all biological life, Carbon. The basic algorithm is addition or fusion. The products of this fusion interact to produce planets, water, oxygen, and ultimately complex and sophisticated life-forms. These life-forms evolve and multiply through cell division, often beginning with the attraction/addition/fusion of sexual interactions. One plus one....

Modern computer programs have recently demonstrated how complexity emerges from simplicity. Scientists have produced living organisms, viruses, from what is conventionally defined as inanimate matter. The assumption that the potential for awareness is a property of all matter is less demanding an assumption than the assumption that it is possible to produce awareness in things that were not previously aware. Therefore we should challenge the hegemonic convention of speaking of matter as inanimate.

The notion of 'latencies' seems like a retrospective attribution of a propergent to the primerties that interacted to produce it, but it is a compelling one. It only seems problematic or anti-intuitive due to the power of the dominant hegemonic ways of defining we are embedded in, and which control and distort all our discourses about TROONATNOOR. The more we reveal, the more we de-mystify, the more intuitive such ways of seeing and defining become. We don't need any myths to account for the nature of reality, once we comprehend the true nature of reality. It is simple.

Complexity is merely a matter of the level of composition we adopt. Primerties interact to produce propergents, which are the manifestation of properties latent in the primerty. Over billions of years these interactions produce reflexive 'conditions' in which all the universe as we know it can manifest. Evolution accounts for the emergence and accumulation of ever greater complexity and sophistication in terms of life forms. The synergistic relationships that appear so mystical, so ineffable, so seemingly indicative of a 'benevolent creator' with a 'purpose', are in fact intuitive and unsurprising, in fact to be anticipated, as soon as we comprehend the nature of reality.

There is absolutely no need to refer to a mystical 'god' to explain anything that can be observed on this earth. God has become redundant. God may not be dead, but god is now redundant. God may live on in the minds of those who subscribe to the hegemonic social reality, and he may serve some affective (emotional) functions for believers, and some instrumental, socioeconomic-status functions for the hegemonic powers that be in terms benefits, but in terms of 'explaining' anything, he is no longer necessary. The universe will do fine without him. He can go into retirement. He can devote himself to his hobbies.

The Christian fundamentalists in the U.S had the teaching of evolution defined as a crime. In 1925 John Scopes defied this law, and in the famous 'Scopes trial' was convicted under those laws. However he achieved his purpose, which was to draw publicity to the case for evolution, and against biblical dogmatism.

Capitalism and the justification of the extraction of surplus value

If value is an effect of the causative powers of an individual 'creator', then this individual has a legitimate claim to owning it. The popular conceptions of cause and effect and creation which pervade the popular language culture and hegemonic systems of relations and definitions legitimate a massively uneven distribution of wealth.

However in reality wealth is a social product, an outcome of the interactions of many people. Therefore no individual can lay exclusive claim to 'ownership' of the value produced. Any particular individual's legitimate claims are limited to their individual contribution.

Production requires financial, natural, and human capital. Financial capital has zero value without human capital. You cannot buy anything if labor produces nothing. Natural capital such as land has only a potential value which is limited by the availability and willingness of labor to realize this value, to farm land, to pick fruit, to fish rivers, to hunt and gather. A king with no subjects will only be able to enjoy the value that he can produce with his own labor, no matter how much land he 'owns'. Thus labor can validly claim to have a natural right to a greater share of the value produced than it enjoys under the current hegemonic system of relations and definitions.

The greatest genius cannot realize their genius unless they are fed, clothed, and housed. Most of their innovations would be of little value in the absence a society to applaud them, enjoy them, exchange goods and services for them, and in many cases actually build, maintain, and employ them. As the innovator is in a position to employ resources to their greatest potential, for the benefit of everyone, they should have access to more resources. They should be rewarded for their effort, sacrifice, and risk taking.

However they have no claim to the obscene conspicuous consumption they currently enjoy. However private consumption is not the real 'problem' in terms of inequality and justice. The real problem of wealth relates to the privatization of the society, as distinct from the economy. Wealth buys power and privilege, and generates inequality in social areas such as education, health, and politics, and ultimately the power to 'define' social reality. This leads us to ask, 'what should be for sale?'

Social Democracy: what should be for sale?

Social democracy would limit the power of private wealth to the 'economy', de-coupling it from the 'society'. It would allow a greater degree of economic inequality than social inequality. Private education and health, and private ownership of the media, legal services, and any institution which has social power, and which can be used to generate privilege over generations and for particular narrow socio-economic positions, could be eliminated. Power and influence would then no longer be for sale like any other commodity. Power and influence would be distributed according to judgment skills and holistic reasoning abilities, not according to the ability to manipulate public opinion and gain an electoral majority.

Wealth is only a problem when it threatens social democracy. The opportunity to buy a luxury car does not damage social democracy. It is an incentive to innovate, work hard, make sacrifices, and take risks. However when wealth translates into power, the power to define, it is no longer in the interests of society.

Many may argue that those in a position of economic power have demonstrated their superior judgment. This would justify allowing them greater political power. However the assumption that they would use this judgment in the general interests of their society, or that the same skills which bring economic success for an individual are those that can optimize outcomes for entire societies, is an extremely problematic one.

In fact those qualities which bring success in a capitalistic market economy may be virtually contradictory to those qualities that make a sound statesman. Innovators have a greater claim to social resources, as they can generate more value from them than the general population, but wealth does not always equate with innovation. There are many reasons why a person may have managed to accumulate wealth, including mere direct financial inheritance, successful speculation, pure luck, and opportunistic business dealings. Many of the behaviors that lead to business success would patently disqualify someone from holding public office.

The language of cause and effect, incipient as it is in all reasoning, can be seen to be a form of hegemonic ideology that underlies popular opinions and world views. Religion and pure market driven capitalism are two 'beneficiaries' of this ideology, and its 'hegemonic' status.

The simple act of challenging problematic naturalized language usages, and introducing more valid ones, could change our world. Such acts have the potential to unravel the hegemonic system, and allow us to optimize our systems of relations, our society, and ultimately our life experiences. This is why we should replace the phrase 'cause and effect' with the phrase 'interactions and outcomes'. For 'effect' we should use 'product'. De Bono refers to 'generative' thinking rather than 'creative' thinking. Read more in 'Convergences'.

Articulating and revealing the nature of Order

We can define order in terms of relatively constant interaction-outcome conditions. We can express this simply. We have a condition of order when X and Y always interact to produce z . In other words Z always emerges from the interaction of X and Y . Our definition concerns the nature of predictability. We can predict and expect the emergence of Z from the interaction of X and Y . The question then arises of how certain we can be of the stability of the algorithm governing such interactions, of how sure can we be that the interaction of X and Y will always produce Z .

Order and Stability and fallacies of composition

The referent of stability we adopt will be reflective of, or relative to, our time frames of reference. Depending on the time frame taken, nanoseconds or millennia, different interaction-propertgent sets will be defined as stable over time. Over nanoseconds many more things will appear stable than when considered over millennia.

In this sense, whether we ascribe order or chaos to a condition or situation will be dependent on the time frame over which we consider the event or relationship. Order may thus be seen to be an artifact of the time frame, or time 'level of composition', adopted.

As propertgents are constantly replicated or reproduced over time, slight variations may emerge. In fact any particular order may be seen to be transitional. In this sense, we arbitrarily identify totals as persisting or stable over time by defining certain properties as essential, necessary, or sufficient to defining the object, process, or set of relationships, as the same thing over time.

We identify a person over time as being the same person from birth to death. We take some properties of a thing as sufficient, say personality, or appearance, independent of the fact that many properties of the thing are not stable over time. We must also then consider the concept of atrophy. The concept of order and atrophy can only be applied to arbitrary sets of properties, processes, or relationships, such as the birth, life and death, the composition and decomposition, of a discrete living entity.

When we say a definition is arbitrary, we mean that there is no necessarily objective compelling reason for applying this particular definition. It is the arbitrary whole which we define as the person which operates under conditions of order and atrophy. The atoms that constitute them are enduring. They exist before they became integrated into this whole, and will exist long after the organism dis-integrates. It is only the organism that experiences this integration as birth, and this disintegration as death.

The level at which we decide to define processes will influence the degree to which order or chaos are ascribed. In this way, we may ascribe harmony, order, and even synergy to a society as a whole, when in fact many of the individuals which constitute it experience chronic conflict and disorder. Often observing the society over longer time frames would reveal a history of conflict, and endemic conflicts which have not yet surfaced, but will in future wreak havoc and chaos. The appearance of order, peace, and general wellbeing, would be, therefore, merely an illusion. The impression gained of the society is dependent on the level at which it is observed. Of course the beneficiaries will experience a much higher level of synergy, harmony, peace, well-being, and order than the exploited wage-slaves.

The fallacy of composition operates on the principle that we assume that the properties observed at one level are constant at other levels. The level could be a time frame, or whether we are referring to parts of a system or the system as a whole.

Slavery was essential to the production of all that was 'glorious' about ancient Rome, and ancient Roman 'culture'. However Rome as such never existed. It is a concept, in the same way that any 'majority' is only a statistical construct. The majority, or Rome, cannot experience any benefit or cost. The question we must ask is whether the good experienced by any particular individual Roman, outweighed the cost experienced by any individual slave. Of course, presented in this light, there is no way of legitimating forcing one person to suffer for another's benefit. The 'glory' of Rome cannot justify slavery. The 'glory' of Rome was founded upon the sacrifice of the well-being of the majority of individuals to increase the wellbeing of a minority of individuals. The benefits to one individual came at a cost to another individual. Habituation alone would ensure that the absolute costs were greater than the absolute benefits experienced. See 'Convergences' for more details.

The question you must ask yourself is whether you would you sacrifice your own wellbeing, all your rights and dignity, or those of your daughters and sons, your mothers and fathers, your grandmothers and grandfathers; for a few grand palaces, good roads (the equivalent of trains running on time), a bit of nice architecture, and so on. Is it

really worth all that? Or is it only 'grand' when it is other people who are sweating and laboring in the quarries and on the building sites?

I have taken the concept of the fallacy of composition from my Economics studies. The particular fallacy of composition that I remember relates to the recognition that while it might be good for an individual to save rather than consume, if everyone saves, and no one consumes, then there will be no demand for production, and economic growth will be retarded, resulting in economic recession, and widespread unemployment.

Order as constantly reproduced epiphenomena

There is no 'order' as such. Order is an epiphenomenal condition that emerges and is reproduced only as long as the underlying 'conditions' which constantly produce it are reproduced. Every product, resultant, or propergent interacts with other propergents, interdependently resulting in the constant emergence of new relationships and conditions. These interact interdependently again, with virtually unlimited complexity arising from the 'simplest' of algorithms or primerties. Some relationships and entities reproduce and have a relative stability, defined loosely in terms of maintaining, to some degree, broad properties or characteristics over space-time.

However how much 'order' we assign such conditions and relationships is dependent on the levels of composition we adopt when observing the interactions. The longer you observe interactions, the fewer things appear to be 'stable'. The more basic or fundamental the unit we observe, the longer it will appear to be stable. Once we begin observing 'wholes' of parts, the time-frame of stability reduces. Life forms are 'stable' for less space-time than elements are. Even elements are broken down into their constituent parts over large amounts of space-time. Only the primerty is stable as such. Whether awareness is a primerty or a propergent will determine whether we, as awareness units, are stable, that is, permanent fixtures in space-time, or epiphenomenal.

Humean Uniformities

David Hume revealed that we assume that things will interact in the future in the same way they have in the past, that is, uniformly. Hence the assumption became known as that of Humean Uniformities. Hume demonstrated that this assumption is implicit in all scientific laws. By doing so Hume revealed that no argument is purely empirical. Implicit in all statements is the assumption that interaction-outcome relationships will be the same in the future as they were in the past. However we cannot observe them.

We cannot know for certain what will happen in the future, and what conditions will exist. Induction is derived from experience, from observation. Deduction is derived from principles or laws, and not from observed interactions. Induction is generally considered to be superior to deduction, to be more certain, more reliable, more concrete. Hume thus revealed that implicit to all induction, is an element of deduction. Hence we have reason to be 'skeptical' of the claims of scientists for their 'inductions', their 'laws'. I have included a summary of Hume's 'Treatise on human nature' which also deals with my own following arguments concerning the ideology of cause and effect, in 'Convergences'.

The ideology of cause and effect

The language of cause and effect has been naturalized in populist and scientific usage. However it is in fact highly problematic. If X can cause Y in Z, then it should be able to cause Y in W. If a pin can cause a balloon to explode, then it should be able to cause the same effect on a lemon. The fact that a pin cannot cause a lemon to explode, demonstrates that it cannot, in and of itself, of any power it has, cause anything to explode. The explosion is in fact a property emerging from the interactions of the properties of the pin and the balloon. There is no cause and effect as it is popularly conceived.

What I wish to highlight is how subtle yet powerful a slight or subtle misconception can be. Language can have widespread implications for how we formulate arguments, and make decisions. Language is the tool for building up all our 'knowledge' about the world. If our tools are corrupted, distorted, faulty, and inappropriate to the task, then the 'knowledge' we construct with it will be flawed. A tradesperson is only as good as their tools. See 'Convergences' for Hobbes' and Hume's contribution to this argument.

Things that initially seem totally unrelated, such as the statement 'the pin caused the balloon to explode', or 'on the seventh day god created man', reveal themselves, upon interrogation, to be intricately interdependent. The currency such statements have is also interdependent. They iteratively reinforce and internally, reflexively, validate each other, when in reality they are nonsense statements.

When we express the balloon-pin interaction more precisely, the statement about god creating anything loses currency. If nothing can cause anything, then nothing can create anything. This is an example of 'unlearning' dogma. The ideology of cause and effect is so naturalized and taken for granted that it is not recognized as an ideology at all. It is hegemonically defined as a 'fact'. It is in fact dogma. There are no 'cause-effect' relationships, only 'interaction-outcome' relationships.

By being more precise about interaction-outcome relationships, we eliminate dogma. By being more precise, we prevent dogma from getting a foothold in the first place, and avoid the difficulty of unlearning or eliminating it, rooting it out from its ubiquitously and intricately interwoven positions in the popular culture and popular language culture. We might use the analogy of an intellectual or noetic 'enema', or the eradication of a tape worm or other parasite that has 'wormed' its way around all our internal organs.

At best, people are not prone to examining their popular language culture. Most people are struggling to cope with their lives to even think much about anything. We must therefore be extremely careful to limit the potential for them to misunderstand in the first place. We need to 'start at the very beginning', to quote the wise Maria, and avoid nonsense concepts from entangling us in their sticky, complex webs.

We must be careful that the statements circulating in the popular language culture are precise enough to avoid iterative and reflexive spirals of misrepresentation, misconception, and misunderstanding. Quite innocent misunderstandings can ultimately lead to quite disastrous outcomes via extremely intricate and subtle routes. Refining the popular language culture is one of the most political acts one can undertake. The popular language culture is at the root of, and reflexive of, the popular culture itself. It is the true basis of hegemony, and therefore of hegemonic power. The power to define is the ultimate power that is merely expressed in terms of socio-economic and political power.

The beneficiaries employ this power to protect their own power and benefits.

Everything re-iterates and is reflexive of everything else, both in the primary reality, and in the secondary realities, including the dominant social reality of the hegemonic culture.

If people are sincere about seeking transparency then there should be no resistance to using the more precise formulation of interactions and outcomes rather than 'cause and effect'.

The slightest imprecision in the popular language culture can iteratively and reflexively corrupt a whole system of beliefs. Hegemony depends upon such imprecision to mystify, obstrucify, and deflect and deter interrogation. Apparently minor changes can iteratively and reflexively bring on dramatic changes, like a butterfly flapping its wings can bring on a tropical storm. Thus we must insist on increasing precision, to insist on being pedantic. We must replace the ideology of cause and effect with the scientifically and linguistically more correct and precise concept of interactions and outcomes. We must replace the term 'create' with the term 'produce' or 'generate'.

David Hume revealed that cause and effect cannot be demonstrated, that all that could be observed are precedent (before) and antecedent (after) states. We cannot demonstrate that X caused Z in Y, only that in some way, $X+Y=Z$. Note that mathematics, the most precise of all forms of argument, is formulated so that we have interactions and outcomes. The + indicates that the properties or conditions X and Y are interacting. The = indicates that the resulting outcome is the property or condition Z. This is consistent with all that we can in fact demonstrate, the properties or conditions that exist before an interaction takes place, and those that exist after the interaction takes place. We can observe what happens, but we can only speculate, or at best rigorously 'deduce', how the interaction of X and Y produced the outcome Z.

The 'Sivvit' does not have the typical allergic reaction to the Cobra's saliva that most animals experience. We say it is immune to the Cobra's venom. However this is in fact an imprecise language formulation. The saliva itself cannot of itself 'cause' anything. It is the interaction that produces the outcome. The outcome is in fact an allergic reaction. The 'toxicity' of snake saliva is an 'artifact' of the allergic reaction most animals have to it. Therefore it isn't correct to say that snakes have poisonous venom, they merely have saliva that many animals have a fatal allergic reaction to.

Cause-effect ideology arose iteratively and reflexively from attempts to ascribe order and meaning to the world, to impose order upon it. It emerged from the language in which this order was formulated. Gods, which 'caused' things, made existence comprehensible, and controllable, via appeals to them. Religion was the original science, with the plurality of gods eventually generalized as one unique 'cause', one God. This God was to be the cause of everything, the creator.

Science continues this process in its own way, in searching for laws of nature. The appeal of such laws is that they reduce the apparent chaos, and provide us with a satisfying feeling of security and power over our environment. Magic and Metaphysics sought god as the ultimate principal underlying all things, which when known, would give us the ultimate power over nature. Einstein sought a unified field theory. The dream of every scientist is to discover an ultimate law underlying all the properties and algorithms in the universe. We seek to understand the nature of all things so that we can optimize our interactions with them. Today we appeal to scientists for our salvation. We place our trust in science. We have faith in science.

Probably our greatest challenge is to know ourselves, and to interact with ourselves optimally, to optimize the realities of our natures, and the nature of our realities. Thus Hume and Freud put an understanding of human nature at the center of their philosophical enterprise. Read 'Convergences' for more details.

TROONATNOOR: EUTHANASIA

Euthanasia (from Greek: eu = 'good'; Thanatos = 'death') is the practice of allowing or helping a person end their own life in as dignified and painless a manner as socially and technically possible. Euthanasia occurs at the fully-informed bequest of a decisionally-competent patient. An individual can give their prior informed consent via a euthanasia directive that can be acted upon by a surrogate or proxy, in the event that they cannot voice their own wishes due to incapacitation or a coma. This should not be confused with death after treatment is stopped on the instructions of the patient himself, either directly or through a 'do not resuscitate (DNR) order'. Enforcing a DNR order has never been considered, legally speaking, as euthanasia. Terminal sedation is a combination of medically inducing a deep sleep and stopping all medical treatment other than pain relief. Under current law and medical practice it is considered a form of palliative care.

Patients of sound mind have always had a right to refuse treatment. However patients have been denied the right to refuse psychiatric treatment. This is a question of informed consent and of problematic cultural definitions of rationality. Thus if you want to force someone to endure their lives, you simply define them as mentally ill. Thus you deprive them of their legal rights to informed consent. Our society has trouble accepting that a person of sound mind would desire to kill themselves. However modern psychological studies reveal that most people who commit suicide have a better grip on reality than the average person. It is in fact their lack of numbing, denial, and other forms of repression, that contributes to their rational decision to end their own lives. Most people who commit suicide are not even depressed. Read more in 'Convergences'.

In cases of animal euthanasia we often use the euphemism, 'to put the animal to sleep'.

Vets use Nembutal for this purpose. Many people suffering chronic conditions have complained that our society shows more mercy towards animals than to humans in this regard. Many people desire the option of euthanasia but are denied access by the governments claiming to be protecting them from themselves. These people are forced to break into veterinary surgeries to steal the Nembutal intended for animals, or to illegally buy Nembutal from others who have obtained it in this way. It is quite inexpensive when bought through legal channels.

The 'straw man' argument is a propagandist or rhetorical technique based on the misrepresentation of an opponent's position, often ascribing a position to that opponent which they do not actually hold. To set up a 'straw man', simply create a position that is easy to refute, attribute this position to your opponent, and then refute it. It then appears, to an audience unfamiliar with the real position of your opponent, that you have refuted that opponent's argument. Its name is derived from the use of straw men in combat training where a scarecrow is made in the image of the enemy with the single intent of attacking it.

We must constantly remind mystifiers and obfuscifiers in this debate that Euthanasia and mercy killing must be done at the request of the patient, either in real-time, or with the patient's prior informed consent expressed in a 'Euthanasia directive', to be acted on in conditions the person has defined in advance. Anything else is murder.

The term involuntary Euthanasia is a 'straw man', and an oxymoron. It is a deliberate attempt to mislead, mystify, and propagandize. Those opposed to Euthanasia constantly try to confuse the debate, for their own purposes, rather than to produce clarity, transparency and promote informed, reasonable discussion. They set up the proto-typical Nazi murderer as the 'straw man' they claim represents the euthanasia lobby. In reality there is no connection between Nazis, and people seeking to ensure we all gain the right to have personal control over our end of life decisions.

As Goebbels, head of the Nazi propaganda ministry has often been quoted as saying, if you repeat something often enough people will believe it. If you attribute some argument to an opponent often enough in the media, then people will automatically associate those misrepresentations with your opponent's argument, and attribute those

arguments or positions to them. Without ever having considered the true position or arguments of the group misrepresented, people will simply assume their arguments have been refuted, and dismiss them out of hand.

In Nazi Germany the term euthanasia was *mis*-used to describe state sanctioned murder. For this reason, in German speaking countries, the currently accepted term for euthanasia is the older 'Sterbehilfe', which translates as 'helping to die'.

Universal access to euthanasia the first 'Protocol'

My first priority *Vis a Vis* justice for humans, is to make euthanasia available for everyone. Part of this process will be to eliminate the violence known as 'religion', which threatens people with 'fates worse than death' for exercising their autonomy. We must provide the opportunity for holistically informed consent regarding 'end of life' options, and facilitate the actor's decisions.

All those who do not want to live in this world should be able to find an easy, painless, and dignified death. At the moment the best available means of death is hanging yourself. The rope places pressure on the Vagus nerve, resulting in swift unconsciousness, and death. Many people experience a full body orgasm before passing out. The most popular euthanasia drug is Nembutal. It is the same drug used by vets to put animals to sleep that doctors use in 'Sterbe-Hilfe' in Swiss euthanasia clinics.

Freely available euthanasia on demand is the first step in my Eden Protocols. Death must be validated and affirmed as a reasonable response to lives not worth living. We must learn to think of life as a means to the ends of positive life experiences. We should dispose of our current sub-optimal lives as soon as it becomes clear they are incapable of delivering lives we can affirm, lives worth living. Either we will inherit new ones in this or better worlds, or we will cease to exist. Either is preferable to most of the lives that people are forced to endure by 'noble' lies of 'fates worse than death', psychological manipulation, and force, in the interests of others, the beneficiary classes. Anti-euthanasia laws are a form of slavery and violence which would not be tolerated in any just society.

Life has no ulterior purpose. Life is an end in itself. The 'meaning' of life is pleasure. All our motives reduce to the desire to experience pleasure, and avoid displeasure. In a deterministic universe the only 'meaning' is pleasure and pain. Lives that are not pleasurable should be abandoned. Plato clearly stated the motives of those who spread 'noble lies' that suffering serves some purpose which will become clear to us one day. Thus everything is for the best, in this, the best of all possible worlds.

In reality pain is merely feedback that something is wrong. Where we cannot correct this fault, and eliminate the pain, whether emotional or otherwise, we have no reason to endure the pain. Religion is perverse in defining suffering as noble, encouraging us to 'bear our cross'. Worse, it threatens us with 'fates worse than death', worse than anything we could suffer in life, in the form of an eternal torment. For this reason threatening someone with hell is the worst form of violence that exists. We must treat it as such. Such threats are the worst threats you can make. It is obscenely unjust that those who make such threats face no prosecution whatsoever?

Keep questioning the opponents of euthanasia to find out at what point they would define their own lives as not worth living. Gradually take away their rights, their satisfactions, their freedoms to and from, the things that make their lives worth living, until you arrive at the point where they admit that yes, at that point my life would no longer be worth living.

Then ask why they might still endure their lives. A sense of duty? Would they want their children or partners to endure lives not worth living out of a sense of duty to themselves? Then finally ask if they would find it appropriate for others to impose their own religious views, and the consequences of them, upon them and theirs. This is what it means when a religious person denies another the legal right to euthanasia. What happened to the notion of secular government?

So what if you get what you need, if you don't get what you *want* (Why survive if life is not actually worth living?)

What could it matter what you do get, if it is not what you want? You get what you need? Need for what? To survive and be dissatisfied with what you get? Getting what you need simply to survive and reproduce the misery is hardly a consolation. The very concept is absurd. If some force had produced this life with some object in mind, it was certainly not for our benefit. Life appears to trick us into serving its ends, with false hopes, unwarranted optimism, and last but not least the 'affirmation reflex'.

We are means and not ends. In the past we just accepted that we were slaves to the wills of our owners and 'the gods'. We feared the 'fates worse than death' which were inflicted on those who dared seek to escape this world, and their families. Today the State still denies us access to euthanasia, with the same motivations. Surely if life is so good, it has no need to coerce our participation. If those who claimed to have our interests at heart when denying us access to a dignified, swift, pain-free death were genuine, they would use the resources they had to ensure that our lives were worth living. Instead they threaten us with fates worse than death, misinform us about the process of dying, and deny us euthanasia.

The Affirmation reflex

When we survive despite all the hardships, misery, blood, sweat, and tears we are faced with, we imagine we have won some victory over life. Yay! What sublime absurdity. It is like slaves congratulating themselves that they have survived the worst their slave masters could do to them. They have lived their lives sweating and toiling in hardship and misery, producing value for their masters to consume, but they have survived. Yay! We define the endurance of suffering as some sort of defiance, a 'triumph of the human spirit'.

This is predicated on the illusion that 'things can only get better'. We imagine that the worst is over, and the future is bright. However the light at the end of the tunnel brings us out into the daylight for a while, until we find the tracks lead on into further tunnels. Each time we imagine that each time we emerge from the darkness, that this time it is for good. However after the war is before the war. There are always more conflicts and problems awaiting us.

Our wills are not free. We serve a will that is not our own. It is clear that we are at best slaves to our own desires. What is in reality worse is that most of us are in fact slaves to other's desires. Our efforts satisfy other's desires more than our own. We produce the value that the beneficiary classes consume. We provide the services that make the beneficiary classes lives comfortable, rewarding, and satisfying. We fulfill our roles as 'evolutionary fodder', reproducing ourselves, and working hard at surviving, and ensuring our children survive to go on to do the same.

The massive irony is that it is death that provides us with the greatest motivation to go on living, and even to reproduce ourselves. When faced with our own mortality, our own imminent death, the 'affirmation reflex' kicks in, and despite how depressed we are, how much suffering we endure, we tend to 'fight' to survive. We fight even though we hate our lives. We fight even though our lives have no meaning. We fight even though we are slaves. We fight simply as this is our reflex. Death provokes the affirmation of life. This is the ultimate irony. Death and destruction is a real aphrodisiac. Putting a positive spin on suffering

Be grateful for blisters, as you wouldn't have them if you couldn't walk. Be glad of telephone bills, as they mean you have people to talk to. Be glad of the high electricity bills, as they mean you have a fridge and air-conditioning. This is the sort of self-hypnosis that many religious leaders will hope you subscribe to. There is of course some truth in it all, but the danger is that we will endure things that we don't really have to, things that are easily avoidable. The danger is that the privileged are allowed to live in their luxury, while we congratulate ourselves on our suffering, cos you can't suffer if you are dead. Of course the dominant hegemonic interests do everything to make us fear death, and perhaps even more so, dying.

My Prisoner analogy

Life is like a prison in which the prison warden lies to all the prisoners that if they work hard enough they can earn their release. 'Arbeit macht frei'. They grant a few prisoners their 'freedom' to mislead the rest that it is possible for all of them. This is their motivation to put up with the terrible conditions they live in, and to keep working hard. For most the only 'liberation' will be death.

However they are told that those who die working hard will be rewarded, if not in this life, then in the next life. Otherwise what motivation would the prisoners have to live? In fact most were conceived in the prison, and don't ever comprehend that they are in a prison. In reality only the warders, and those who built the prison, as a factory to produce the benefits they consume, are aware of the true nature of the prison.

And the prison? It is at one level our society in which the beneficiary classes exploit and reproduce inherited inequality to serve their own narrow self-interests. However at a deeper level it is our will, our desire. We are all slaves to our wills, to our inherited desires. Some people do get to satisfy their desires, and do live lives worth living.

However their happiness is a form of propaganda. It is not possible for everyone to live like them. They can only enjoy such privileges because others are paying for these rewarding lifestyles. Others are producing the benefits they enjoy. So they motivate us all to put up with our misery, in the false hope that one day our endurance of lives not worth living will 'pay off'. The worst thing about all this is that the illusion lasts at least long enough for us to reproduce ourselves, and our situation. This is the point at which our own response-ability becomes clear. Things can only persist if we reproduce them.

Well Jeez, gosh, thanks god

'God only lets bad things happen to those who can handle it'? Well Jeez, gosh, thanks for the vote of confidence. But in reality most people do not 'handle' it. They suffer, go mad, and they die.

Intellectual support for the 'right to die'

The Chinese philosopher Zhuangzi (circa 370 to 301 BCE) in the fourth section of his 'The Great Happiness' expresses pity to a skull he sees lying at the side of the road. Zhuangzi laments that the skull is now dead, but the skull retorts, 'How do you know it's bad to be dead?' There is of course no way to know. In fact the 'Dao Te Ching' defines death as the ultimate objective of the Daoist sage, in the same way that Plato's Socrates does.

Chuang Tzu (ca.300 BCE) like the Dao, Socrates, Plato, Schopenhauer, and other Chinese philosophers, concluded that there exists no valid reason to prefer life to death. The living prefer life, and the dead prefer death. In Chapter 8 of the Dao we read 'The reason I have great trouble is that I have a body. When I no longer have a body, what trouble have I? '. Later we read that 'It is just because one has no use for life that one is wiser than the man who values life'. (Ch. 75)

Goethe and Schopenhauer view suicide as the greatest comfort in life. Herodotus writes: 'When life is so burdensome, death has become for man a sought after refuge'. Schopenhauer in 'The World as Will and Representation' writes 'They tell us that suicide is the greatest piece of cowardice... that suicide is wrong; when it is quite obvious that there is nothing in the world to which every man has a more unassailable title than to his own life and person'.

In the late 18th century, Goethe's 'Die Leiden des jungen Werthers', ('The Sorrows of Young Werther'), the romantic story of a young man who kills himself because his love proves unattainable, was reputed to have caused a wave of suicides in Germany.

Friedrich Nietzsche, in 'The Twilight of the Idols', writes, 'To die proudly when it is no longer possible to live proudly. . . From love of life, one should desire a different death: free, conscious, without accident, without ambush.'

Philosopher and psychiatrist Thomas Szasz affirms that suicide is the most basic right of all. If freedom is self-ownership, ownership over one's own life and body, then the right to end that life is the most basic of all. If others can force you to live, you do not own yourself. You belong to them.

Jean Amry, in 'A Discourse on Voluntary Death', provides a moving insight into the suicidal mind. He argues forcefully and almost romantically that suicide represents the ultimate freedom of humanity. 'We only arrive at ourselves in a freely chosen death'. He killed himself in 1978.

Existentialists of the 19th and 20th century went from thinking of suicide as a last resort, or something that one must justify, to considering it something that one must justify *not* doing.

Euthanasia threatens the wealth and privileges of the beneficiary classes

We must consider the ridiculous current state of affairs in which it is completely legal for a doctor to kill an unborn baby, but not to help a fully responsible adult realize their own informed decision to have a good death. Perhaps one factor promoting this state of affairs is that rationally we do not anticipate running the risk of being in the situation of the unborn baby. However people do appear to fear being killed as a result of euthanasia laws. For some ineffable reason people fear that euthanasia laws will somehow promote an increase in murder.

Laws against euthanasia are slavery laws, for they force persons that have no interest in living to endure their suffering in the interests of others.

A historical example which directs our interrogation towards the vested interests lying behind anti-euthanasia laws is that of Norway in the middle-ages. The Black Death, the Bubonic plague, had decimated a large proportion of the population. So many serfs died during the plague that the aristocracy were forced to work their own lands. As a result of this lost labor supply, lower production, and lower taxes, much of the Aristocracy were reduced to relative poverty. This is a clear example of how labor is the source of all value. This is the reflexive basis for anti-suicide laws.

In the absence of labor, land has little or no value. No Aristocrat would willingly consent to their beasts of burden exiting from a cruel and harsh existence. This would threaten the very basis of their power and wealth. For the same reasons, the powerful would seek to encourage reproduction, a means of increasing their labor supply and wealth. Those that didn't oblige, would, ironically, be defined as selfish, as bad citizens, or as heretics. This, reflexively, would encourage them to define homosexuality, anal sex even between heterosexual couples, contraception, oral sex, and masturbation, all as sin. Such behaviors threaten to reduce the supply of labor, the source of value. Value cannot be appropriated by the privileged, if it is not first produced by labor.

The biblical imperative to multiply, and the State's encouragement of the institutionalized relationship of the family, are designed to increase the supply of labor, which is more or less the only source of value. Capital is the product of labor. Machinery is produced by labor. Automated production lines are produced by labor. All value is produced by labor. Wild animals must be hunted, slaughtered, and prepared. Wild nuts, berries, fruits, grains, seeds and vegetables must be collected and prepared.

All forms of production only have a market value if there is a market for it. Land has no value if there is no demand for it, or labor to 'work' it.

New forms of production and services such as automation and robotic service provision could reduce the need for labor. Value could be produced by non-human self-replicating automatons of one form or another. Machines could build machines, thereby reproducing themselves. Alternatively mass production might produce such a level of pollution, deplete resources so thoroughly, and destroy the environment so irreversibly and ubiquitously, that it comes to represent a threat to the wellbeing of the privileged and powerful. Overpopulation and environmental stresses could threaten global security. At some point in the future labor could come to present more threats than opportunities for the privileged and powerful. They would then have vested interests in encouraging contraception and non-reproductive forms of sexual expression, and sanctioning, legitimating, normalizing and naturalizing, Euthanasia.

Only when continued population growth comes to be defined as a liability rather than an asset, will the hegemonic, popular culture define euthanasia and contraception positively. Of course public opinion will be constructed and consumed. The masses will believe that it is they themselves that influenced the government.

The anticipation that this state of affairs will actually be realized is reasonable. The widespread availability of contraception, tolerance of non-male-with-female-vaginal sexual expression, and the introduction of liberal abortion laws in most of the Western Developed world, can be seen to reflect an increase in automation and mechanization, and the irreversible environmental destruction resulting from mass production and consumption.

There are fundamental questions which need to be asked in relation to Euthanasia. The most fundamental question is that of whether all lives are worth living, and who should decide when a life is not worth living. This raises the associated question of whether anyone has the right to deny, to someone who themselves has decided their life is not worth living, the right to a good death. Further, the question needs to be asked as to whether the interests of anyone other than the suicider should be considered. The argument that the denial of euthanasia arises out of interests external to the individual is a compelling one.

Thin-edge-of-the-wedge and slippery-slide arguments, as applied to arguments concerning Euthanasia, are scientifically arbitrary. They have no inductive, or deductive, scientific basis. They are not compelling. The claims that voluntary suicide would legally or morally justify and hence promote murder are specious, mystifying, obscurantist, and most probably, disingenuous. Any such claims must be seen as insincere, specious sophistry.

We must recognize the many vested interest groups whose interests are threatened by the acceptance of euthanasia. Representatives and members of the medical and pharmaceutical industries risk losing their greatest market. Most of any individual's expenditure on medical services and pharmaceuticals will occur in the last years, months, weeks, and days, of their lives.

The state and the capitalists lose markets for their products, soldiers for their armies, tax payers, and a surplus labor supply to force down wages and working conditions, every time a value producing or consuming human 'exits the stage'.

Humans often find the knowledge that others are worse off than themselves makes them feel better about their own lot. The threat of finding oneself even worse off is defined by the existence of those who are worse off. In other words, the presence of poverty, homelessness, social rejection, powerlessness, and under-privilege, is a threat to 'not rock the boat', lest one find oneself in that situation or condition. Go along to get along, or you'll end up like the homeless. This is the threat implicit in the existence of people worse off than yourself. Behave, conform, comply, lest you end up like them.

The powers that be realize that there are fates worse than death. If the worst that could befall you was that you could fall asleep and never wake up, then those powers could never coerce, compel, and manipulate you into serving their interests, when you in fact had no interests in living yourself.

A society that denies you the option of a good, painless, dignified, swift, and convenient death, cannot be called a just one. They will happily send you to your death when it serves their interests. They will force you to kill and be killed. They will force you to engage in forms of value production that will maim, sicken, and ultimately destroy you. They will force you to consume their pharmaceuticals and medical services as you slowly and painfully die. They will not let you escape their hegemony, their power. They will not give you the right to die.

Every doctor has access to a good death. It is a fact that Doctors have the highest rate of suicide of any profession. Are doctors more likely to suffer mental illness than any other profession, or the general population? Of course not. Completely rational people make the perfectly sound and informed decision to end their lives. Not all lives are worth living. Doctors wish to have the right to end their lives as and when they feel fit. They commit suicide more often because they have the pain-free and dignified means at their disposal to do so. They are also more informed about the processes of death, and have no fear of them. They feel they have a right to monopolize this right. Who gave them this right?

At least one Doctor, Dr Nitschke appears to support, in principle, universal access to euthanasia. He says ... 'all people qualify, not just those with the training, knowledge or resources to find out how to 'give away' their life. This includes the depressed, the elderly bereaved, [and] the troubled teen. If we are to remain consistent and we believe that the individual has the right to dispose of their life, we should not erect artificial barriers in the way of sub-groups who don't meet our criteria'. ... 'However, I choose to restrict myself to ... terminally ill adults who are articulate, lucid and not suffering from clinically treatable depression'. The notion of a 'clinically treatable depression', however, is extremely problematic, as we shall consider later. Dr Nitschke appears to have adopted this

position after I sent several comments to him regarding his previous position which defined the right to die as the exclusive property of the terminally ill.

Nitschke has been active in developing the 'peaceful-pill', sometimes known as 'Drion's Pill' after the Dutch judge who first proposed it, with the assistance of retired scientists, laboratory technicians, and academics. Their aim is to empower people to manufacture their own 'Nembutal-like' barbiturate in their own homes, using readily available ingredients that the government would never likely be able to 'control', such as nicotine, chlorinated alcohol, and paracetamol. Note that as soon as it became common knowledge that Nembutal was the 'choice' 'end of life' drug, it was, effectively, taken off the market by authorities. Dr Nitschke used Nembutal in the 'Deliverance Machine' in Darwin during the short life of the Rights of the Terminally Ill Act. In countries where voluntary euthanasia is legal and any drug can be used, Nembutal remains the drug of choice.

The capacity to produce a 'peaceful pill' at home would provide us all with 'self-determination' with regards to 'end of life' decisions. It would free us all from the dependent, often fearful relationship we have with the medical profession. It would eliminate some of the trauma that we and our loved ones will have to endure in the face of death and dying. It would allow death with dignity. It would minimize avoidable and pointless suffering. Such a pill would put us in control and free us to make more rational, calm 'end of life' decisions. We would not feel compelled into taking desperate measures which often produce still greater suffering and costs, without ultimately achieving an end to our suffering.

The 'peaceful pill' stands to have as great a positive impact on our lives as the contraceptive pill. We would become empowered with self-determination at both ends of the life-cycle, from conception to death.

We must reflect on the current situation in which the general public appear to be unwilling to accept that anyone might rationally wish to die, or to endorse and facilitate their decisions, while at the same time being unwilling to provide the resources that would make these persons lives worth living. Most people will not accept real responsibility for the situation. They are prepared to 'pass the buck' onto homes for the aged, hospitals, clinics, and social services, where clients and staff alike must endure inadequate resourcing, chronic stress, and often horrific working and 'dying' conditions.

The general public lives in convenient denial of the realities of life for the underprivileged, the aged, and the chronically ill. There is a general current fiction circulating amongst the general public that all pain can be eliminated or managed. The fact is that all pain cannot be managed. As a result of this reality, many people are forced to live in constant pain. Their doctors are unwilling to give them the strong doses of painkillers which would be required to eliminate their suffering, for fear that their patients may die as a result. Many would define giving the patient such a dosage as a breach of the Hippocratic Oath. More cynical observers would define such an act as 'killing a cash cow'.

The general public like to feel good about 'knowing' that the sick and old will be 'taken care of', by someone else, and don't wish to be informed that this is in fact not true. They are not willing to adequately fund the care of persons who need it to a level that would provide them with any real quality of life, that is, a life worth living.

We have an obligation as a society to attempt to make all lives worth living. Where this is not possible, then only the individual themselves should decide if they will endure their lives, or seek a 'good' death. No one asked anyone if they wanted to be conceived, especially into a life not worth living. The very least a just society can offer is the right to exit from the stage in a dignified and painless manner. As a society, where we cannot offer someone a good life, the minimum we have an obligation to do is to provide them with the option of a good, a quick, painless, and dignified, death. Therefore universal access to Euthanasia must be defined as the fundamental universal right of every person.

Depression, suicide, and euthanasia Vis a Vis the beneficiary classes

Despite all the 'innovations' in treatments and the massive use of pharmaceuticals over the last 40 years, the overall suicide rate has remained stable at around 12 in 100,000. Although there are 30,000 official suicides in the U.S each year, unofficial estimates place this figure at around 100,000, as many suicides are recorded as accidental deaths.

The best biological indicator, based on brain autopsies of suicides, is a significant decrease in serotonin levels, which fluctuate during year, falling to their lowest levels in spring. Hence more suicides occur in spring, rather than during the gloomy months as most people assume.

Studies indicate that only 50% of suicides were actually suffering from depression at all. This challenges the conventional notion that suicide is the irrational act of a mentally disturbed individual. This convention is one of many means the hegemonic beneficiary classes employ to protect their own assets, their own means of production. This is the point. They own you. You are a source of value for them. You produce all the value that they consume. You protect their wealth and power as soldiers and police. They do not want their assets to self-destruct. They also need 'fates worse than death' to motivate people to endure their lives, as value producers for the hegemonic beneficiary classes.

Remember that even those who cannot or will not work as such, still produce value for the beneficiary classes. They are bound to end up in abject poverty. Their suffering will represent an implicit threat to anyone considering 'dropping out' of the system, of 'rocking the boat', of 'dissenting', of challenging the hegemonic definitions and 'blowing the whistle' on corruption, and interrogating the injustice implicit in the hegemonic definitions and systems of relations. See, hear, and speak no evil against the interests of the beneficiary classes, or you will end up like 'them'.

Measures to deter suicide, and deny people the right to euthanasia, are not motivated by a consideration of the interests of the potential suicider. They are motivated by the interests of others who benefit from, or stand to benefit from, their endurance of their lives. Suicide represents a decline in the beneficiary classes' asset inventories, their 'human capital'. Remember that all potential value is realized by labor. All value is ultimately produced by human capital. labor is the source of all value. Without labor to consume production, capital has virtually zero value. Supply and demand determine the artificial value of assets, of capital, of goods.

When demand is limited to personal consumption, the value of any good you own is limited to the quantity you can yourself consume. Capital such as land is only valuable when demand exists for it. Hence real estate prices in Australia and England continue to grow due to constant, high levels of immigration, whereas in Germany real estate values are constant, due to a falling population. An entire mountain of fruit trees would only be worth as much to you as you yours could consume. It is only through trade that the excess above your own needs receives its value.

And this value is determined by the demand for it. The more people there are, the greater the potential demand for your capital, and the higher its potential value. This is why the beneficiary classes are in reality against birth control, controls of immigration, population control, reproductive responsibility, suicide, and euthanasia. These beneficiary classes are the hegemonic classes. They own and control the media, the political process, the politicians, the movie industry, the music industry, the publishing industry, and are the core of the Church and legal systems.

Fruit trees are only valuable if you have someone to pick the fruit, and a market for the fruit, consumers. The value of any resource would be limited to what the individual owner themselves could realize from it, with the power of their own labor. There would be little value in owning capital, resources, that you could not employ or realize the potential value of. All value is merely potential in the absence of labor to realize it. The value of capital can only be realized by coupling it to human capital, and then its market value can only be realized by the 'creation' of markets.

The artificial 'market value' is only increased by increasing demand for the products of this coupling of human capital to land and other emergent forms of stored value such as machinery, and financial capital. The

artificial, realized value that is produced in this way can only be protected from being stolen by others by employing human capital to protect it by force.

This force takes the form of legal conventions of 'private property' which are enforced by the threat and use of violence by the state, which is merely a tool of the beneficiaries of this situation to protect their assets and power. This group, the beneficiary classes, naturally form an informal class unto themselves, existing to promote the interests of their members.

Hence the main beneficiaries of 'society' and its laws protecting 'private property', are these beneficiary classes. Hobbes was one of the first to raise the fundamental sociological question, the one that all modern criminal investigators ask when seeking to identify the perpetrator of a crime. 'Cui bono?', 'who benefits'. All deliberate, and even unconscious behaviors are opportunistic acts intended to satisfy some desire. They are determined by the convergence of desire or motive, together with the presentation of an opportunity to satisfy it. Both motive and opportunity converge in the beneficiary classes. See 'Convergences' for details.

And of course when it comes to any seduction, we should be careful to seek the opportunity and motive in both the seducer and their 'victim'. I am not in search of any noble savages. What I seek is authentic 'informed consent'. Those who voluntarily participate in any consensual, mutual, reciprocal social reality, after enjoying a transparent, holistically enlightened informed consent, are welcome to. However few people in the history of humanity have enjoyed such a holistically informed consent.

My intention is not to kill Santa, the Easter bunny, any gods, or other illusions that people wish to subscribe to. My intention is to allow people to form their own responses to their own personal experiences. I desire and seek to empower people to construct their own meanings for their own lives. I seek to holistically inform people, so that they can exercise a genuine holistically informed consent. I loathe the arrogance of a Plato or More, or the Pope's who are their ideological offspring.

As the character in Terry Pratchett's Disc-world novels says, the problem begins when we begin treating other people as means to our ends. This is what the beneficiary classes and their agents do when they deny people accurate information about death and dying, and deny them access to painless and dignified ways to 'shuffle off this mortal coil' when the play, the part, script, costume, stage, props, and director they have inherited fail to produce a life that is worth living. It may be inconvenient for some of the other players, and worse, for the director, but it must be their right.

Otherwise they are not 'free' agents. No-one has a binding contract to continue to perform the role they inherited as part of their holistic inheritance. Any contract they were coerced or tricked into is not morally binding. Only when all actors are free agents, will the 'directors' and the 'financial backers' of the play have a motive to make the play as satisfying and fair for all players as they can. Otherwise they will tend to be lazy when it comes to the welfare of most of their 'company', their 'troupe of players'. They will take all the players, especially the 'bit players', the carpenters, caterers, and stage-hands, for granted.

They will focus on satisfying their audience, the ones paying for the production, the beneficiaries of the play. Of course they will pander to the most talented actors and playwrights, rewarding them well for their participation. These talented, favored, lucky few will have some 'leverage'. The directors know it is in their interests to keep them happy, as the success of the play, and the satisfaction of the audience, depends on them.

The more talented and unique participants will be rewarded, and happy with their roles. They will want the rest of the company to perform their supporting roles, to keep the benefits for themselves, the 'stars', coming. So they will have their own vested interests in the status quo, and put pressure on the rest of the company to acquiesce to their less rewarding roles and fortunes.

It is the beneficiary classes that introduced the taboos against suicide, the threats of eternal torture for suicides, the victimization of the family and relatives of suicides, and it is they who have opposed every attempt to legalize euthanasia. It is they who invented 'fates worse than death', as a deterrent against suicide. It is they who spread propaganda which misrepresents death as painful. It is they who prevent information about the realities and

possibilities of euthanasia and suicide from being readily available to the public. It is they who victimize those who seek to inform the public of the reality of easy and pain-free, even pleasurable, death.

It is they who criminalize the actions of people like me, who want to facilitate authentic 'informed consent' for everyone. Their motives are only now transparent. Most people will construct their own false-hopes and unwarranted optimism. That is their right. But they must also be granted their freedom to choose, the right to informed consent. They have a right to know the truth, and then if they wish, to ignore it. However no-one has a 'moral' right to deny others the right to informed consent. So we must first inform people, and then together reclaim our rights to self-determination. No-one has the moral right to force someone to endure their lives as means to the ends of others. That is the definition of slavery.

The most reliable indicators of who will commit suicide are: homelessness, hopelessness, a lack of social ties and relationships, reversals in economic or health status, the loss of a partner, excessive worrying, severe insomnia, lack of concentration, a tendency to recall bad experiences rather than positive ones, a failure to find love and approval, the feeling that nothing they can do will get them what they want, withdrawal from others, a lack of a rewarding life, feelings of rejection and abandonment, the anticipation of negative experiences in the future, and seeing 'no way out' of this situation or condition.

Around 70% of suicides told others of their plans, usually after an acute depressive episode has subsided and their mood has improved enough for them to have the energy to carry out their plans. One sign of danger is therefore a sudden improvement in spirits in people who had been suffering from severe depression. Another is when the same person starts putting their affairs in order, and gives away prized possessions.

Studies by Alloy and Abraham (1979) show depressed people actually have a better 'grip on reality' than the average person. The views of depressed people are therefore not distorted as convention wisdom would have it. It is not they that are deluded. This supports my own contention that depression, rather than indicating a distorted view of reality, in fact reflects a greater level of awareness and honesty. It is others that have adopted deliberate and unconscious numbing, self-deception, false hope, and unjustified optimism to delude themselves. This is what is meant by being 'well-adjusted'. Thus the repressed 'well-adjusted' tend to be hostile towards the more realistic, aware, depressed person.

Remember that mental wellness is defined in terms of 'social functioning'. Over 40% of males and 70% of females will suffer periods of depression at some time during their lives. All drugs and treatments focus on returning the mentally 'ill' to their role as human capital, means to the ends of the beneficiary classes. Many 'treatments' produce more harm than good for the patient, however this is of little interest to the doctors, whose job is to get them 'back to work'. Read more in 'Convergences'.

Hippocratic or hypocritical?

Just a really obvious note. The Hippocratic Oath is supposed to be defined by the phrase ... 'above all, do no harm' ... Doctors often refer to this when discussing why we, the patient, shouldn't have control over our own deaths, and shouldn't have access to euthanasia. Of course Doctors are the ones who kill unborn babies. It's amazing how meaningless 'principles' are to humans. They twist and distort them to suit their purposes, as convenience dictates. Perhaps the problem is that doctors make too much money from the last years of our 'end of life'. It is a fact that most of our medical budgets are consumed in the last few years of our lives. Extending our end-of-life is big business.

Maslow's needs hierarchy, Expectations Theory, heaven and hell, and motivation to not suicide

Wealth is good, as long as it can be enjoyed by everyone, rather than just a few. Wealth motivates, as long as everyone can be confident of achieving it. Once people lose faith in their opportunity to gain wealth, they lose motivation, and stop investing real effort and energy. They produce less value than they could have, and would have, in a more just society. When people gain the full benefit of their efforts, when most of it is not appropriated by the managers and owners of capital, then they have a greater incentive to produce value. When everyone knows that they benefit from everyone's work, as much as everyone benefits from theirs, they will feel good about working hard, rather than feeling, rightly so, exploited.

And it isn't just a question of the distribution of value produced. In our current system of exclusive wealth and opportunity, the people and groups who have wealth also exclude the others from real opportunities to produce value.

When the producers of value get to keep their fair share of it, they have a real incentive to increase their productivity. Small business owners who sell of their businesses to their employees as franchises often experience the phenomena of huge sudden gains in turnover and profits. When people stand to gain from their own efforts they are of course motivated to work harder than when their employer gets most of the profits. Remember this is one of the real reasons why slavery went out of fashion. Nominally 'free' workers are more highly motivated. This also accounts for 'racist' suggestions that slaves, and 'colored peoples' in general are lazy. Of course when you are a slave or being exploited, you have no incentive to work hard. What sort of fool works hard only to enrich others?

When you give people real opportunities to work, and then to benefit from their own labors, they will have the incentive to work hard and make sacrifices. They will be motivated, if they at least expect that by doing so they will get the things they desire. It is fair to extrapolate from Maslow's needs hierarchy, that once you have met your basic needs for food, shelter, and clothing, you will only be motivated to invest greater effort and sacrifice if you expect it will yield the 'higher' needs, including approval, acceptance, status, security, and ultimately love and affection. This means that if all you expect to achieve from your work is merely survival, your motivation will cease once you have met your basic needs. This is why a slave will only do as little as possible. No matter how hard they work the most they can expect in return is that their basic needs will be met.

The same applies to all other 'instrumental' relationships. People must expect that whatever 'marginal' effort they put in will yield desirable marginal returns. And if you don't expect that you have any chance of getting what you want, then you won't be motivated to do any more than the minimum necessary to avoid discomfort, hunger, cold, homelessness, and so on.

Most of our behaviors are instrumental, that is, are means to ends. We don't do most things because they are intrinsically rewarding, but because we expect them to produce access to things which we do desire as ends in themselves. Few people discipline their caloric intake because it is intrinsically rewarding to do so. It is a form of discipline, effort, and sacrifice. We do it for the most part to be more attractive. In other words our 'motivation' for dieting is a desirable figure and appearance. And we desire to be attractive as a means to an ends. If we could find gorgeous, sexy, affectionate, charming, wealthy, intelligent, attractive partners without making any sacrifice or effort, than most of us wouldn't care about our appearance that much.

Most material rewards are desired more as instrumental means to other ends, than as ends in themselves. Most status goods are more valued as means to 'social' security, acceptance, approval, and desirability, than as ends in themselves.

And this of course brings us back to the 'rationality' or otherwise of 'suicide'. Of course all our behaviors are ultimately motivated by our desires. Reason is merely the rationalization of the actions required to satisfy our desires. Merely surviving is not motivating per se. We are intrinsically motivated to avoid discomfort and pain, except where

it is, paradoxically, rewarding or pleasurable, in which case it is a means to an ends, and endured or desired on that basis, and not as an end in itself), and have a reflex aversion to death, however once we feel secure in our survival, we do require more to justify enduring the stress, demands, sacrifices, pain, sweat, tears, disappointments, and general suffering of daily life.

We require hope for a better future. We need approval and acceptance. We need to meet our craving for physical affection and sensuality. We need to have faith in romantic 'love'. We need to have a life that justifies itself. Once we lose faith, once we lose the 'expectation' that our endurance and effort will be rewarded by these things, then we begin losing our motivation for striving. We can even lose our motivation to get out of bed. We will not be motivated if we have no expectation that our efforts will be worth it.

For most people this is the situation they find themselves in. The dominant hegemonic orders, whether Catholic, protestant, Buddhist, Hindu, or otherwise, needed to offer positive and negative expectations in order to counter the reality of most people's life and lack of motivation. They were promised some form of reward in an afterlife or the next life, for enduring the current one. They were threatened with hell or other forms of punishment or cost in the next or after life. These threats and promises were meant to provide the motivation that was missing from most people's lives. They had to 'internalize' the expectations that enduring their lives, even working hard and making sacrifices in the absence of any 'present-life' motivation, would yield desirable outcomes, and avoid undesirable ones, in the next or after life. After legitimating the dominant hegemonic order, this was the second most important 'function' of religion.

I was surprised to find that even Buddha-ism has many hells, where you can enjoy extreme fear and helpless anguish, whilst savoring of the many torments on offer. The menu is quite diverse, offering at least 8 hot and 8 cold 'Narakas', with their own unique 'worlds of pain'. Basically you behave or you end up in one of these hells for as long as it takes to work off your bad karma, and ascend into a 'higher' realm. We are talking hundreds of thousands of years my friend! The detailed descriptions rival those of Dante. They are pure dogma, so I won't waste time with details. However rest assured, if I had to choose which hell to end up in, I wouldn't become a Buddhist!

I doubt these 'hells' had any place in the teachings of Buddha. They are just another 'Myth of Er' which 'religions' employ to manipulate people. Fates worse than death Buddhist style! However descriptions of the Narakas are common in Buddhist commentary and popular literature, to keep 'believers' in line, and keep the slaves from attacking their masters, or worse, killing themselves.

For value to be 'appropriated' it must first be produced by labor. Then that labor must accept having the value it has produced appropriated. It will do so if it has Internalized the definitions of such systems of relations as 'legitimate', natural, normal, even 'God-given'. This is the true basis of hegemony. Once such definitions have been Internalized and naturalized they become hegemonic. Then the systems of relations they iteratively and reflexively justify, legitimate, and naturalize, become truly hegemonic. We then have a hegemonic set of mutually reinforcing, re-iterating, reproducing, and naturalizing definitions and systems of relations.

Labor will then take its 'position' within the systems of relations for granted, as natural and normal. It will accept that life is a 'vale of tears' that must be endured to avoid an eternity in hell, or even worse lives next time around. It will console itself with the promises of heaven, or a better life next time around. It will therefore be motivated not so much to live, as to not commit suicide.

In more secular societies, the motivation to not commit suicide came in the form of appeals to 'the family' (when you are dead who is going to care for your loved ones?), the criminalization of 'attempted suicide', *mis*-information regarding dying itself (for example, that hanging is painful), the denial of access to euthanasia, and the denial of the right to accurate information regarding 'end of life' decisions.

You must never lose sight of the fact that the only way the dominant hegemonic interests can enjoy privileges is if they have labor who produce value, and accept having most the value they produce 'appropriated' from them. It is for this reason that people are denied access to euthanasia.

The dominant hegemonic interests could redistribute the privileges and opportunities for positive life experience that they have, to provide a positive motivation for people to live. However they won't do so unless they need to, and they won't need to as long as labor re-produces itself, and the hegemonic sets of reflexive definitions and systems of relations it is embedded in.

Anti-euthanasia - suicide laws and proscriptions force the producers of value and privilege into collusion and complicity with their exploiters. They are denied the right to 'withdraw' their labor, and coerced into effectively giving their *mis* informed consent for the systems of relations they are victimized by.

This is perhaps the penultimate act of violence that is perpetrated upon the victims of the dominant hegemonic order.

Legislation and national political movements

Euthanasia was legalized in Australia's Northern Territory by the Rights of the

Terminally ill Act 1995. However the law was 'voided' by an amendment to the Commonwealth to the Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978. Only three people were legally euthanized under the Act. Although it is a crime in most Australian states to assist in euthanasia, prosecutions have been rare. In 2002, relatives and friends who provided moral support to an elderly woman who committed suicide were extensively investigated by police, but no charges were laid.

The Commonwealth government subsequently tried to hinder euthanasia with the passage of the Criminal Code Amendment (Suicide Related Materials Offences) Bill 2004. In Tasmania in 2005 a nurse was convicted of assisting in the death of her elderly mother and father who were both suffering from illnesses. She was sentenced to two and a half years in jail but the judge later suspended the conviction because he believed the community did not want the woman put behind bars. This re-sparked debate about de-criminalizing euthanasia.

The Belgian parliament legalized euthanasia in late September 2002. Proponents of euthanasia state that prior to the law, several thousand illegal acts of euthanasia were carried out in Belgium each year. According to proponents, the legislation incorporated a complicated process, which has been criticized as an attempt to establish a 'bureaucracy of death'.

In 1992 a proposal was made known as Drion's Pill. This fictional drug would be a set of 2 pills. The first pill could be taken without any harm, the second pill would have to be taken a couple of days later. This would give the patient the time to think things over. The drug was never developed, the proposal however indirectly started up the discussion of euthanasia in The Netherlands. The Termination of Life on Request and Assisted Suicide (Review Procedures) Act took effect on April 1, 2002. It legalizes euthanasia and physician assistance in dying in certain circumstances. The law essentially codified what had already become tolerated practice and unofficial law by judgments in the courts. The law permits euthanasia and physician assisted dying when each of the following conditions is fulfilled:

- the patient's suffering is unbearable with no prospect of improvement
- the patient's request for euthanasia must be voluntary and persist over time (the request can not be granted when under the influence of others, psychological illness or drugs)
- the patient must be fully aware of his/her condition, prospects and options
- there must be consultation with at least one other independent doctor who needs to confirm the conditions mentioned above
- the death must be carried out in a medically appropriate fashion by the doctor or patient, in which case the doctor must be present.
- the patient is at least 12 years old (patients between 12 and 16 years of age require the consent of their parents)

The legislation provides for the legal recognition of a 'euthanasia directive'. Such declarations stating the patient's desires in advance, can be used when a patient is in a coma or otherwise unable to state their wishes.

The legislation has wide support among the socially libertarian Dutch, who have one of the world's highest life expectancies. There is however persistent opposition, mainly organized by the churches. Euthanasia remains a criminal offense in cases not meeting the law's specific conditions, with the exception of several situations that are not subject to the restrictions of the law at all, because they are considered normal medical practice.

These include:

- stopping or not starting a medically useless (futile) treatment
- stopping or not starting a treatment at the patient's request
- speeding up death as a side-effect of treatment necessary for alleviating serious suffering

Euthanasia of children under the age of 12 remains technically illegal, however Dr. Eduard Verhagen has documented several cases and, together with colleagues and prosecutors, has developed a protocol to be followed in those cases. Prosecutors have agreed to refrain from pressing charges if this 'Groeningen protocol' is followed.

In 2003, in The Netherlands, 1626 cases of Euthanasia were officially reported, meaning that physicians assisted in 1.2% of all deaths. Usually the sedative Sodium Thiopental is intravenously administered to induce a coma. Once it is certain that the patient is in a deep coma, typically after some minutes, a muscle relaxant is administered to stop the breathing and cause death.

148 cases or 0.14% of all deaths, were the result of physician assisted dying. Patients were usually given a strong (10g) barbiturate potion to drink. The doctor is required to be present to make sure the potion is not taken by a different person, by accident, or for an 'unauthorized' suicide, or murder, and to monitor the process and be available to administer a muscle relaxant to bring on death if the potion is regurgitated or otherwise ineffective. This was necessary in 41 of the 148 cases. Most reported cases concerned cancer patients. In most cases the procedure was applied at home. In two cases the doctor was reprimanded for not being present while the patient drank the potion. They said they had not realized that this was required.

In the U.S state of Oregon the 1997 'Death with Dignity' law requires that all individuals requesting euthanasia be:

- 18 years of age or older, unless consent is given by a parent for children under the age of 18
- a resident of Oregon
- the patient must give and be mentally capable of giving, informed consent
- they must be diagnosed with a terminal illness that will lead to death within six months -they cannot be basing their decision to die on depression or another mental disorder -all this must be verified by two physicians, and two witnesses.

Patients are prescribed a concentrated barbiturate solution, which is typically 9 grams of Pento-barbital. The time from ingestion to unconsciousness ranged from 1 to 20 minutes with 4 minutes being the average. Death occurred between 5 minutes to 48 hours afterwards, with the average time being 20 minutes. There have been few complications (3 out of 171) where regurgitation did occur, but a sufficient dose of barbiturates was retained to be effective.

Since 1998, 171 Oregonians have used the 'Death with Dignity' law. The physician is not required by law to be present when the patient ingests the barbiturate but sometimes the physician opts to be present.

In the last 20 years, some states in the U.S have faced voter ballot initiatives and 'legislation bills' attempting to legalize euthanasia and assisted suicide. Some examples include: Washington Ballot Initiative 119 in 1991, California Proposition 161 in 1992, and Michigan included Proposal B in their ballot in 1998. Public opinion concerning this issue has become increasingly important because widespread support could very well facilitate the legalization of these policies in other states.

A recent Gallup Poll survey indicated that 75% of Americans supported euthanasia. Further research, however, has shown that there are significant differences in levels of support for euthanasia across distinct social groups. Results of large scale social surveys in the U.S indicated that respondents who did not affiliate with a religion were found to support euthanasia more than those who did.

In Australia 'The Suicide Related Materials Act' came into effect on 6 January 2006. The Act makes it a crime for adults to discuss end of life issues on the telephone, fax, email or Internet. This comes after earlier actions by the the Australian federal government which overturned the legislation under which Dr Nitschke performed the first legal assisted Euthanasia in Australia. For this reason Dr Nitschke has moved his web-page and other activities to New Zealand.

Euthanasia tourism in Switzerland

'Dignitas', a chain of Euthanasia clinics in Switzerland, which used a cocktail of drugs to provide a dignified 'final exit' at their clients request, is facing Government 'crackdowns' against what they are calling 'Euthanasia tourism'. My recommendation is that third world countries develop this industry. Of course the television series 'Futurama' has 'Euthanasia booths' on street corners.

Some case studies highlighting inconsistencies in people's reason(s)ing against Euthanasia

The case of Sandy, who was diagnosed with high-grade prostate cancer in February of 2005, illustrates the true value of universal access to Euthanasia. He said that 'having access to Nembutal gave me a second chance, I simply needed to know that I could have some control over my own life. That was the start of my new life.' Sandy, being in Australia, was forced to procure Nembutal illegally from a Vet. Vets in Australia have reportedly charged up to AUD 5000 for bottles of Nembutal which retail for AUD 100.

Nembutal is apparently freely available from Vets in Mexico and Indonesia, and this has resulted in 'Euthanasia'-tourism. As with all other 'controlled substances' where there is a market it will be supplied, with the unfortunate consequences which arise from all forms of criminal activity. 50ml packaged sterile veterinary Nembutal (pentobarbital sodium) has apparently been 'arriving' into Australia from Mexico since November of 2006.

Sandy's example sends a clear message. Having control eliminates the fear of death, facilitates a higher quality of life, makes suffering more easily endured, and makes life more valuable. Persons with control over their end of life decisions are never compelled to take desperate preemptive measures while they are still physically able to. They are able to live longer and more rewarding lives. In other words they are less likely to commit suicide.

A 69-year-old Gold Coast woman Nancy Crick is the only person known to have used Nembutal obtained over the internet in Australia to end her own life, in May 2002.

It is noteworthy that the Oregon Department of Human Services states that, in future, actions taken in accordance with (Oregon's Death with Dignity Act) shall not, for any purpose, constitute suicide, assisted suicide, mercy killing or homicide, under the law. The Oregon Department of Human Services will in future only use the term 'persons who use the Oregon Death with Dignity Act.' We should ask ourselves why the term 'suicide' if not appropriate for elderly or chronically ill patients, should be considered appropriate to describe any end of life decision made by anyone. Ageism and 'pathology-ism' is rampant in the 'end of life' debate. Why is it more rational for an old person to want to die than a young one? Why should the old, who have all the political and economic power, be allowed exclusive control of a valuable resource, ensuring access to it for themselves, while denying it from the younger generations? Why should the old withhold the most basic human right from the young, and maintain it as their exclusive property?

'I know they can keep me alive a long time, but what's the point If the pleasure is gone and the direction is steadily down, why should I have to draw it out until I'm 'rescued' by cancer, a heart attack, or a stroke. That could take years. My own philosophy is that choosing the best way to end your life should be the ultimate individual right, a right to be exercised between oneself and one's beliefs, without intrusions from governments or the beliefs of others'. This is a quote from an 80 year old woman. But why doesn't the same argument apply to anyone who has decided that their life isn't worth living anymore?

People seem more able to empathize with, and sometimes support, the desire of those with incurable disease, and who face terrible pain, to end their own lives. It is even easier if those people are old, and in our minds, close to death anyway. What we have is ageism and 'health-ism'. We assume that anyone young and physically healthy should want to live, and that any desire they have to die must be temporary and the result of some mental illness. Further, we assume that this mental illness is a correctable depression.

Each of these assumptions is problematic. It is questionable whether the assumed mental illness is 'correctable', and that the 'correction' as such, even if it manages to eliminate the 'death wish', leaves the person with a life that they themselves consider worth living. The 'side-effects' of many drugs can be just as bad, if not worse, than the conditions they are supposed to treat. Read more in 'Convergences'. Just because we think young healthy people should want to live, doesn't make the assumption valid.

Huib Drion, a former Dutch Supreme Court judge and professor of civil law, argued that people aged 75 or over, living alone, should have access to a Euthanasia pill. He described this as 'universal access'. How he or the Euthanasia activists can call this a 'universal access' model is beyond me. It is clearly an exclusive 'ageist' model.

Why should mentally ill patients be the only category of patients to be excluded from a right to control over their end of life decisions? If the desire to end your life is a symptom of mental illness, then surely that mental illness must be defined as 'terminal'. If other patients can legally refuse treatment for other terminal illnesses, then what justification is there to refuse mentally ill patients the right to refuse treatment, and take control over their own 'end of life' decisions? Where is the consistency in the anti-Euthanasia lobby's arguments? The death wish is equally a product of terminal cancer as of 'mental' illness. If neither can be cured, then why make a qualitative distinction between the two illnesses?

Consider the following statement made by an 80 plus year old woman, who admits that she can thank tranquilizers for her evasion of depression. Imagine how you might respond if it came from a 30 year old who didn't want to live. She says: 'I know there is nothing fatally wrong with me and that I could live on for many more years. With some luck I might even be able to recover a bit of my former lifestyle, for a while. But do we have to do that just because it's possible? Is the meaning of life defined by its duration? Or does life have a purpose so large that it doesn't have to be prolonged at any cost to preserve its meaning? Life has to end sometime and this is the right time for me. My decision is not about whether I'm going to die -we will all die sooner or later. My decision is about when and how'.

The way she really wanted to die was to be given a morphine drip that she could control, but that was illegal. She did not have a terminal condition or agonizing pain that might justify a morphine drip. Far from it. Her heart was strong enough to keep her alive for 10 more years, albeit as a frail, bedridden, partially blind, partially deaf, incontinent, and possibly stroked-out woman. Her Doctor agreed that her quality of life had sunk below what she herself was willing to bear. She ultimately, with the full consent and knowledge of her doctor and son, simply stopped drinking with the intent of dying of dehydration, and was given medications to deal with any discomfort during the process. She wanted her son to tell the whole world that this type of death was a comfortable, quick, and more or less 'legal' alternative form of euthanasia. She was lucky to have had the support of her doctor and son. Were she a ward of the state, her refusal to drink would have been defined as a mental illness, and she would have been forcibly hydrated with a drip and force-fed with a tube.

I can't imagine a doctor being so receptive to virtually the same arguments from a 'lebensmuedig' (tired of living) 40 year old. Our ageism, and our denial that anyone who doesn't want to live could be 'sane', let alone 'rational', is quite stubborn. And anyway, if we assume that person is 'mentally ill' then surely that person has the same right to escape their own form of chronic suffering as an aged person with some other form of debilitating and painful illness. Life is terminal and incurable. It is only a question of time. What meaning can 50 years have in the scope of eternity? What is the difference between the 80 year old lady's 10 years and the 30 year old's 40 years, after the fact? Once we are dead, does it matter how old we were when we died?

For many people who have completed whatever education is available to them, and achieved whatever achievements their mediocre inheritances have allowed, the second half of their lives will be a mere routine of repetitions that bring little satisfaction, and which merely serve to bridge their present with an unavoidable, and in many cases predictably painful, death. For most people death at 40 is no more a waste of a life, than an 80 year old woman dispensing with the last 10 years of her life.

It seems likely that the real reason a retired 80 year-old is allowed to die with dignity is that they no longer represent human capital for the beneficiary classes. They are unlikely to be an active source of value. The only interest they might have in them is as 'cash cows' for the medical industry.

Perhaps, at its deepest core, our denial that a young person might rationally consider Euthanasia might come down to this: their rejection of their life would be a resounding rejection of us, a resounding rejection of life in general. The rejection of this world as it is would be a terrible public relations disaster for the privileged, hegemonic

elites. I once wrote 'bitter tragedy for the playwright, for as we fall, the plot loses credibility'. If we let them exit this world, then how could the rest of us justify enduring our lives? Once the fear of dying is eliminated (and for those unenlightened the fear of death itself), then what motive would most people have for enduring their lives of exploitation and dissatisfaction, of often chronic pain and lifelong 'angst'?

The hegemonic beneficiary classes need a large pool of young people to produce the value that they consume, to support the lifestyles that they enjoy. This pool would keep unemployment high, and hence the conditions that labor could insist on, low. How would the hegemonic elites respond if masses of young people decided to 'shuffle off this mortal coil'? They would have no response but the traditional one, to define suicide as mental illness, or criminal, and to punish those who attempted it themselves, or who assisted them. Does this 'ring a bell'?

Why did the Australian Federal government introduce legislation to criminalize even public debate over the issue of Euthanasia? What specious arguments did they bother conjuring up to justify their actions? What could justify such blatant 'censorship'? Surely the definition of a free society included freedom from censorship? George Bernard Shaw reminds us that 'All censorships exist to prevent anyone from challenging current conceptions and existing institutions. All progress is initiated by challenging current conceptions, and executed by supplanting existing institutions. Consequently the first condition of progress is the removal of censorships.'

If we consider the most liberal Euthanasia laws to date, the Dutch laws, we can see how inconsistent most people's reason(s)ing is with regard to whose 'death-wish' should be validated and who should be 'protected from themselves'.

Re: the patient's suffering is unbearable with no prospect of improvement. For most people life is suffering, and there is no prospect of it improving, no matter what the hegemonic order's propaganda machine would like us to believe.

Re: the patient's request for euthanasia must be voluntary and persist over time (the request can not be granted when under the influence of others, psychological illness or drugs). This is reasonable and sound. However when some people's death-wish persists they are labeled as chronically mentally ill, and all their human rights are denied them, on the pretense of 'protecting them from themselves'.

Re: the patient must be fully aware of his/her condition, prospects and options. It is a fact that the definition of 'clinical depression' would cover such a situation. Clinically depressed patients are often those who are 'too' aware of the reality of their lives, and the prospects for happiness and a life worth living they could reasonably expect.

Re: there must be consultation with at least one other independent doctor who needs to confirm the conditions mentioned above. Double checks are good for pilots, surgeons, and those considering ending their own lives. However the only person who has a right to judge if a life is worth living is the one who has to live it. The only time the judgment of a third party should count is where that third party guarantees to provide the person whose life they insist on 'protecting' a life worth living. In other words the rich and privileged would have to sacrifice their own wealth and privileges to afford the person the same quality of life that they enjoy. Don't let yourself be fooled. It is the rich and privileged who are behind the entire effort to deny us universal access to euthanasia. If they insist I live, then they have the obligation to give me what they have that makes their lives worth living.

When we further consider the following 'specific conditions, or 'situations' that are not subject to the restrictions of the law at all, because they are considered normal medical practice; stopping or not starting a medically useless (futile) treatment; stopping or not starting a treatment at the patient's request; and speeding up death as a side-effect of treatment necessary for alleviating serious suffering; we see that if mental illness were treated consistently as an illness (otherwise what exactly is it, and how do you justify 'treating' it at all, especially taking money from patients for claiming to be doing so?), then death-wishers would have the right to refuse paternalistic psychiatric treatments, and doctors would be allowed to 'speed up' the process leading to suicide. Unless the medical profession and pharmaceutical industry can claim to have 'cures' for mental illness, then they must define any treatments they sell patients as medically useless and futile treatment. Of course all treatments, with regard to death, are futile, as all they can do at best is delay death. Death is, at least statistically, inevitable.

Changing cultural attitudes to suicide

To the ancient Egyptians suicide was seen as an acceptable practice for anyone facing unendurable physical or emotional suffering. The early Stoics practiced suicide among the elderly, and in principle recognized everyone's right to die when and how they chose. Epicurus encouraged his followers to die by suicide when their lives no longer brought them happiness. In early Roman society, a recognized profession of trained technicians were available to perform 'assisted suicides' when their clients desired to die. Nobles, who 'owned' themselves, could 'dispose of their property' as they saw fit. Of course slaves, criminals, and soldiers were the property of their owners and the state.

Most early civilizations viewed suicide as a means of escaping an unbearable existence, or of releasing loved ones from the burden associated with caring for the sick or elderly. There was no 'stigma' attached to such a death.

However in medieval Europe, Secular and Church policy on suicide drew on Roman law, which institutionalized ancient Greek traditions, to justify 'criminalizing' the act of attempted and 'successful' suicide. The accused man who sought to escape the law, the soldier who refused to do their duty, or the slave who was effectively destroying their master's lawful property, by killing themselves, were defined as criminals under Roman law.

The first church-led condemnation of suicide occurred when Jewish leaders refused to allow the bodies of Christian suicide victims to be buried in 'hallowed' ground, and forbid eulogies and public mourning for the deceased.

The first 'Christian' to publicly declare suicide to be a sin was St. Augustine. He was responding to the widespread, mass suicides committed by Christians in the 4th Century. Augustine's influence on church doctrine lead to the 305CE Council of Guadix purging from the list of martyrs all who had died by their own hand. Using the pretext of piety, the 348CE Council of Carthage condemned those who had chosen self-death for personal reasons and the 363CE Council of Braga condemned and denied proper burial rites for all known suicides.

The aim of all these measures was to curb the ever present high rate of Christian mass suicides in the face of religious persecutions, and early Christian writers who defined suicide as the most pious of aspirations. It seems the early Christians actually believed in heaven, and followed my advice. Why on earth would you endure this hell on earth when there was such a glorious paradise awaiting you in heaven?

Thomas Aquinas' 13th century 'Summa Theologiae' reinforced Plato's Socrates' and Aristotle's definition of suicide as a selfish act of subversion in which the actor put their own desires above the needs of their community. According to Plato, Socrates argued that we were the property of the gods, and had no right to destroy what didn't belong to us.

In 11th-century England, and Scotland, the property of the suicider, and therefore their dependents, was forfeited to the king. Suicides were therefore often 'covered up' by local authorities and relatives, to avoid the confiscation of property, and the resulting burden upon the local 'poor relief'.

Religious, civil, and criminal sanctions against suicide were enforced during the middle Ages in most of 'Christian' Europe. Suicides were denied proper burial, and often their body would be dragged through the streets; the head placed on a pole outside the city gates as a warning to others; the body thrown outside the city gates to be eaten by animals, or buried at a crossroads. The property and possessions of the deceased and their family were confiscated. These were meant to be 'fates worse than death'. Anyone who attempted suicide would be arrested, publicly shamed and, Monty Python couldn't beat this for irony, sentenced to death.

The Catholic Church didn't revoke its laws denying suicide's a Catholic burial and rites until 1983. Great Britain abolished criminal penalties for attempted suicide in 1861, but Ireland didn't do so until 1993. In France, suicide was decriminalized during the French Revolution. Influential intellectuals like Voltaire and Montesquieu saw suicide as a question of liberty. Therefore laws against suicide represented a denial of liberty. He argued that if you couldn't enjoy life and contribute to the welfare of the community, you had a right to suicide. Schopenhauer and Hume also defended an individual's absolute right to suicide. They also considered that the involuntary institutionalization of people 'at risk' of suicide would violate this 'sacrosanct' right.

Buddhists are threatened with 'bad karma' for killing themselves. By avoiding problems now, they would be burdened with even greater ones in their next reincarnation. Being reincarnated as a human was considered a real privilege. Of course for the feudal lords such as the Dalai Lama, life, and religion, was all about their personal privilege.

The term 'revolutionary suicide', which Jim Jones and David Koresh borrowed from Huey P Newton, a founder of 'The Black Panthers', seems quite apt to describe the act which seeks to bring about greater social justice by eliminating the potential for the opportunistic exploitation of inherited inequality. If you kill yourself then you cannot be exploited, and you cannot therefore passively contribute to the process of exploitation. If there are no victims, then there can be no exploitation.

I was surprised to find that my 'suspicions' regarding the motivation for denying people access to euthanasia, and punishing them and their loved ones with 'fates worse than death', were clearly justified as far back as Plato's Socrates, who defined people as the property of either the gods, the state, or their slave master. The individual was defined as having no right to dispose of themselves as their own interests dictated. They were expected to 'slave-on' in the interests of the gods, state, and slave-master. If they didn't, not only were they 'punished', but their families would be punished as well.

Of course the opposite was also practiced in many cultures. The old and unproductive were encouraged to suicide, to stop being a burden upon society in Eskimo, Norse, Samoan, and Crow Indian societies. This is the reflexive inverse of Aristotle's arguments that we should do what serves 'the community' interests. Funny how that usually means whatever is good for the beneficiary classes, the dominant, hegemonic, privileged elites.

However, I think Socrates may have been disingenuous in claiming that the god's owned him. He may have been trying to provoke the reader into recognizing the absurdity of such a 'reductio ad absurdum', and as such recognizing the absurdity of belief in the gods per se. Or perhaps Plato added these 'dialogs' in order to 'rehabilitate' his revered teacher? Perhaps Plato feared being persecuted himself. Remember that Plato's student Aristotle abandoned Athens to avoid the same fate Socrates had suffered.

The Socrates in Plato's 'Phaedo' sees death as the ideal home of the soul.' (Phaedo, 63c). The philosopher, as a virtuous person having practiced detachment or 'disengagement' from bodily desire while alive, will be eternally free from the body once dead. Those who were attached to bodily pleasures in life will have cultivated a soul which is '...polluted... impure at the time of her departure...the companion and servant of the body... in love with and bewitched by the body and by the desires and pleasures of the body... led to believe that the truth only exists in a bodily form, which a man may touch and see... do you suppose that such a soul will depart pure and unalloyed?' (Phaedo, 81b)

As detailed in 'The Myth of Er', those attached to the flesh will inevitably be drawn to the flesh, and reincarnation. Note the similarities with 'The Tibetan book of the dead'. Their craving for life will also make their time in Hades a punishment per se, whilst they will also be punished in particular for the bad deeds of their past life. The soul is immortal and the course of its passing into the underworld is determined by the way in which it last behaved while alive. The philosopher should not commit suicide, but should practice 'dis-engagement' from the material world, as a means to gaining 'virtue'. Note the similarities with Buddha's 'detachment' as a means of avoiding reincarnation, and its idealization of experience devoid of corporeal existence. Plato's Socrates and Buddhism's Buddha both promote the cultivation of detachment from the material, pleasure seeking, pain producing, world of bodily desires, whilst admonishing suicide as pointless, and even an offense against 'the good'.

'Death, then, the separation of body and soul, is the philosopher's ideal. He will have lived his entire life preparing for and hoping for death. However the body is the property of the gods, and man would be punished were he to destroy something that he does not truly own' (Phaedo).

In Plato's Phaedo Socrates talks of an existence after death. However in 'Apology', Socrates says that, even if, '...death is a state of nothingness and utter unconsciousness,' this would be 'an unspeakable gain.' (Apology, 40c) Socrates doesn't appear to rate earthly existence too highly. This helps explain why he seemed to provoke his peers

into voting for his death, and why he didn't take advantage of offers to assist him in evading a trial by leaving Athens, and later offers to help him escape from prison, and thus to escape his ultimate death from drinking Hemlock.

In Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism, Moksha (liberation or release) refers to liberation from the cycle of death and rebirth and all of the suffering and limitation of worldly existence.

There are 52 suicides in Shakespeare's plays. Of course the question of whether 'to be or not to be' is his most famous reflection on suicide.

To be, or not to be, that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die, to sleep,
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep! Perchance to dream:ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin(knife)? Who would these fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourne
No traveller returns, puzzles the will, And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we
know not of?

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

The bible makes no comment on suicide, so there is no biblical basis for the laws against it. However the Church defined it as a sin for fear of losing their congregations to it

In the late 17th century widespread epidemics of mass suicides occurred at the prompting of Christian priests to escape the expected return of the anti-Christ from 1666 onwards. Farmers stopped tilling their fields and abandoned their farms. Workers of all kinds abandoned their work.

Fijian males suicided in keeping with the widespread belief across the ancient world that dead spirits keep the same form they left life with. Therefore it was a good idea to die in the prime of life, or at least as soon as you were unable of living with dignity. The forms of death chosen included burial alive, self-immolation, having a priest

cut your throat, getting a relative to break your spine with an axe blow, being buried in clay pots, strangulation, and stabbing. Alternatively a man would gather their neighbors, relatives, and friends, and request that someone kill him as his strength is failing. He tells them all he is tired of life.

The Vikings were known to wound a dying comrade with a spear to make it appear he had died in battle, which was necessary to ensure his entrance to Valhalla. The old and the sick were regularly killed at their own request. Odin 'sacrificed himself unto himself' to obtain the secret of the Runes. Remember Jesus is finally killed when a Roman soldier spears him, and Jesus, in terms of the 'Trinity', represents god sacrificing himself.

Hanging as the next best alternative to Euthanasia

In the absence of access to Nembutal or other forms of Euthanasia, hanging is the next best alternative for most people. The following information is provided for all of those with no access to legal Euthanasia, in an attempt to dispel myths about hanging being painful. Here is a web-posting on the theme 'suicide by hanging': It's possible to 'hang' with both your feet touching the ground. All that's necessary is pressure on the neck, cutting off the blood supply to the brain. You lose consciousness after about 10 seconds.

This is a blog entry I came across. I am quoting the writer. I myself have never attempted suicide. I have too much to get done this life while I have the holistic inheritance to do it. Who knows what resources I will have in my next lives?

"Last night I was home alone, I took an electrical cord and went to the basement. I tied one end of the cord around my neck, and pulled the other over a beam in the ceiling. I stood on the arm of a couch, and pulled the cord until I was on my tiptoes. Then I stepped off. I held the cord tightly. I felt it tighten around my neck (and I hadn't even tied any kind of slip knot). I remember just hanging there, feeling lightheaded, but not suffering. No pain, just a little discomfort. After a few seconds, I tried to breathe. I was able to inhale with difficulty, I could hear my rasping breath. Then nothing. I came-to on the floor. I was probably conscious for no more than ten seconds (before passing out), if that long. I had banged my mouth, and cut my lip, but other than that, I was fine, though a little dizzy. Knowing that I will pass out so soon, I will be conscious for no more than ten seconds, next time I will tie the cord to the beam".

Death by hanging is not death is by asphyxia. You don't suffocate as most people believe. You can continue breathing, the oxygen just doesn't get to your brain, as the pressure of the rope stops it. The rope puts pressure on the Vagus nerve that runs along your neck. It results in heart failure. You simply lose consciousness, and if you are not resuscitated, you die. This is why 'scarfing', the practice of strangulation to heighten pleasure during orgasm, can be deadly. The effects on the heart are unpredictable. You can easily kill your partner in this way. Of course for many people, dying in the throes of sexual ecstasy is hardly the worst death imaginable.

The dominant hegemonic powers do all they can to mislead you about hanging. They want you to believe that you will die a painful death. Children have hanged themselves in the few minutes their parents have left them alone. They didn't struggle or suffer. Using a soft and thick enough rope will prevent any real discomfort.

Scarfig is a well-known (and often fatal) sexual practice in which people strangle each other to heighten their sexual response, their pleasure, their orgasms. It is well documented that hanged men often die with a 'priapism' or 'death erection', after having ejaculated some fluids (but not semen), whereas in women the labia become engorged and menstrual blood is released. Orgasm is ultimately the result of temporary hypoxia or asphyxiation. The French call it 'la petite mord' or 'the little death'. This is why people can experience full body orgasm during excessive physical training, such as running, horse-riding, or doing 'chin-ups'.

Until we all have the power over our own lives, we will remain slaves to the interests of the dominant hegemonic vested interest groups. We will live to increase their life satisfaction. Until the slaves can effectively 'remove their labor supply', the beneficiaries of exploitation will never be compelled to concede them the true value they produce. Euthanasia is the ultimate bargaining position for labor. If enough people did leave the playing field, then the dominant hegemonic powers would be forced to 'level the playing field' and to 'play fair'. Otherwise they'd have no-one to play with. They'd have to do all their own dirty work, and produce all their own value. Imagine some executive trying to negotiate with their cleaner if there were more executives than cleaners. The cleaner would refer to the age-old argument of the executive, supply and demand. The cleaner would become a scarce resource, and be able to demand respect, rewards, and privileges.

The minimum they could expect would be the same hourly wage as the executive. However as being an executive has many non-fiduciary rewards, and given that most executives would rather play in their board-rooms than clean, the cleaner would be in a position to demand a higher wage than the executive.

The terrifying precedent, or return to old practices, of community orders

'Community orders' which legally force people to take medication, or be forcibly institutionalized, are a disturbing development. Under Religious fundamentalism, Communism, and Nazism, people were either forced to take medication, or were institutionalized, if they behaved in ways that the dominant forces in society defined as inconvenient or disturbing. At present anyone expressing a desire to end their own lives without any terminal illness is defined as mentally ill. Under community orders such people would be forced to take chemical straight jacket pharmaceuticals or become institutionalized. The Euthanasia lobby must pay careful attention to the new 'community orders' and how they are employed.

In the case of most 'illness', the individual has the right to refuse any treatment if they can give informed consent, even if such a decision will likely result in their death. A cancer patient, for example, can refuse treatment. A patient with kidney failure may disconnect their kidney dialysis machine. Of course there is the rub. Our culture defines the desire to a good death as irrational, and hence claims that the person with such a desire is implicitly demonstrating their inability to give informed consent. This is an example of how the hegemonic definitions ultimately deny individuals what freedoms they do nominally possess. We are slaves to the interests of the dominant hegemonic beneficiary classes interests.

Some suicide statistics

Around 6 people over the age of 65 suicide in Australia every day. Statistically suicide is the greatest cause of death for 15-35 year old males. International surveys indicate that as many as one in five high school students, and one in ten adults, have considered committing suicide at one time or other. While women are more likely to attempt suicide, men are more likely to succeed at it. Suicide is more common among successful and highly creative people. Only those who have attained the satisfaction of their desires can truly recognize how ultimately dis-satisfying life is a-la Buddha. In contradiction to expectations, over 60 studies indicate that most suicides occur in late spring and early summer, while the fewest occur during winter.

The number of suicides in the U.S, 31,000 in 1996, outnumbered the number of homicides. Suicide is the eighth leading cause of death overall, and the third leading cause of death among American teenagers. In Canada, suicide is second only to motor vehicle accidents as a cause of death among adolescents. In 1997, 17,566 official suicides were recorded compared with 13,522 official homicides, according to the 'National Vital Statistics Report'. Thirty thousand succeed at suicide every year in the United States. Half a million more make an attempt medically serious enough to require emergency room treatment.

The nature of Rationality and Intention

Rationality is concerned with means and not ends. If a person wants to die, and shoots themselves in the head, then the action is rational, as it can be expected to have the intended outcome. The decision to employ particular means is rational if it can reasonably be expected to attain the intended ends. Rationality can only validly be formulated in terms of means, rather than intentions.

A person who has the intention of killing themselves is defined as irrational by popular convention. Implicit in hegemonic defining practices is the assumption that no rational person would want to die. In fact there are many situations in which 'rational', 'reasonable' people desire death. We as a society must come to terms with this, and validate their end of life decisions.

Rationality is bounded by the amount and quality of relevant information available to the decision makers. It is further bounded by the actor's ability to evaluate information critically, and form sound judgments. Ethics is, in a similar way, concerned with intentions and not outcomes. The information that influences decisions is not perfect. The outcomes of decisions are often other than intended. Actions motivated by the best of intentions can have unintended, negative, outcomes. The most we can offer is informed consent based on transparency and self-determination, and universal access to Euthanasia, a 'good death'.

The perversity of 'heroic interventions' to extending the lives of chronically ill

People imagine they can 'set their lives straight'. People will cling to their lives, imagining that salvation is just around the corner. They demand heroic medical interventions which redirect resources away from those who could make productive use of them. The massive costs of prolonging life a few years, or even months, would be considered criminal by members of a just society. It really represents a denial of the inevitability of death. It is clear proof of a lack of faith in the religious dogma people pretend to ascribe to. We devote billions of dollars of scarce resources to heart, liver, and other surgery to old, chronic drinkers, smokers, and obese over-eaters, simply to prolong their misery, to give them a few more days' time to 'set everything straight'. At the same time we deny children access to health and dental care, to educational opportunities, even to basic nutrition and social services.

My situation, and yours?

I will not reproduce life as it this. This represents a rejection of life. I have had a vasectomy. But I have already have paid so much. I will try to get some pleasure for all my pains, but without reproducing these pains, seeking what pleasure is available, but without lying to anyone, including women. I will be true to my principles. I suspect I am being 'tricked' by life into enduring it, out of a desire to make it worth living. I am suspect that we are means to some ends which are not our own. Of course I am aware that other humans seek to exploit me to their own ends.

What I am talking about here is something that transcends that. Something along the lines of the Matrix proposition. I am aware that seeking to recoup sunken costs is typical human nature. It usually results in the accumulation of greater costs, with no hope of ever recouping them. However by the time we realize we have already served our purposes, produced and protected the value that others consume.

The question Cui Bono that Hobbes raised centuries before Marx, leads me to wonder. Of course I recognize that I am denied euthanasia by those who wish to exploit me, or who at least insist I share their fates. They are too scared to die, and thus endure their lives. They are jealous of anyone who has the guts to die, and thus escape. Why should I be allowed to die when they can't bring themselves to it?

But beyond all this I wonder if some other form of life is exploiting us in ways we cannot imagine. Does some other form of life benefit from our suffering? Do we exist as means to their ends, as most of us exist as means to other humans' ends, those of the beneficiary classes?

Any contract we have signed with nature must have been signed under duress, and offered in bad faith on the part of nature. Life is not worth living for most people. Our only power lies in the fact that life must be reproduced to persist. That is where we have the power to thwart nature.

Your chances of a horrible, painful, drawn-out death are reasonably high. And you will die. This is a fact that you pretend to yourself that you accept, however in reality your deny it in most of your behaviors. You will die. You will. It is only a matter of time. Thus you cannot really kill yourself. All you can do is decide the time.

Most of your dreams will go unfulfilled. Your hopes are unrealistic. Your optimism is unwarranted. Your faith is fatuously absurd, and not even genuine. You do not believe what you claim to believe. If you did, the world would be a totally different place.

No-one is indispensable. All those people who you think depend on you will get by fine without you. They will replace you with others. Many of those you imagine love you will actually be happy that you are gone. They actually wanted to divorce you or leave you, but couldn't bring themselves to do so. So you will be doing them a favor. When your wife or lover leaves you, you will hate them. Right now you love them, and could not bear to hurt them. However one day you will want to hurt them. This is a statistical probability. Most relationships end in this way. So forget about love as a reason to live.

Unless you were born with a positive holistic inheritance, some exceptional talents, abilities, wealth, privilege, beauty, sex-appeal, or any other resource you can convert into power, wealth, and privilege, you are never going to live the life you aspire to. As the bible says, to those that have little, the little that they do have will be taken away, and given to those who already have the most.

Whatever level of life satisfaction you have experienced on average over the course of your life so far, is likely to be the highest level you are ever going to experience. People's life-chances rarely change. So the average experience you have had of life so far is likely to define your future experience. Ships do not 'come in'. Fortunes rarely change. Gamblers tend to lose. This is the basis of 'luck'. For a few to have more than they have earned through their effort, sacrifice, and risk-taking, the many have to lose. Someone has to pay if someone else is to benefit. Lotteries are a tax on fools. Life is such a lottery. If you are not already a winner, you are unlikely ever to be one. So do not endure your lives, and worse, reproduce them, based on the delusion that your fortunes are going to change.

Hell was invented by the beneficiary classes as a 'fates worse than death' which they could threaten you with to ensure you would endure your life, and continue producing the value that they consume. Heaven was invented by the beneficiary classes to motivate you to endure your life in the faith of a reward for doing so in the next or after life. The exploited classes were willing to be duped and seduced, as they want it to be true. But it is a lie, and illusion, a myth, a superstition. Read 'Religion', the companion book to TROONATNOOR if you are unsure.

If life demands little of you, then hang around, enjoy what you can, and see if maybe you get lucky. However if life means hard work, discomfort, homelessness, hunger, rejection, and suffering, then it is best to stop the game here. No-one really cares about you any further than you represent means to their ends. You owe them nothing. You have no obligation to anyone. There will be no 'redemption'. There is no Karma. There is no free will. Whatever you do, including killing yourself, is determined. There cannot possibly be sin.

And still we persist in feeling special

We persist in feeling special, even in face of slaughtering each other like livestock, dying like insects, suffering random, pathetic, horrible deaths and painful illnesses, parasites, viruses, cancers, and car 'accidents'. Yet somehow we still imagine we have gods, angels, and fairy-god-mothers watching over us, looking out for us. To most other humans we are merely means to their ends, or worse, competition. They try to exploit us, and at best tolerate us, repressing their hostility. To parasites we are food, habitat, hosts. We are prey to predatory diseases, viruses, bacteria, micro-organisms, and worms. We are no more or less significant than any other sentient life form. Our wills are determined. Our will is simply to experience pleasure and avoid pain. All other motivations are mere derivatives of this generative motive.

Everyone here will be dead within 100 years. Depression is reality a sober recognition of this reality. It represents the failure of denial, numbing, unwarranted optimism, and other fantasy mechanisms in our nervous system. Only in this sense is depression a flaw, failure, weakness, or fault. Illusion, delusion, spin, selective perception, bias, and denial insulate our consciousness from reality. As such they are adaptive. However for the most part they merely motivate people to continue enduring lives not worth living in terms of any rational cost-benefit analysis.

Of course the authors and promoters of such illusions are the beneficiaries of the situation, those whose holistic inheritance provides them with satisfying, rewarding, comfortable, pleasurable lives. These illusions include anthropocentrism, teleological functionalism, 'noble lies' of Karma, heaven, and hell, which promise justice, and rewards, in some after life or next life. These deceptions include the ideologies of 'the blank slate', 'the noble savage', 'golden ages' and future utopias. Everyone is deceived that one day 'their ship will come in'.

However ultimately, when life provides no satisfactions, every and any frustration of our wills, any dissatisfaction of our desires, becomes 'the last straw'. At this point we can 'fly into fantasy', and put our faith in religious dogma, simply hypnotizing ourselves. Or we can accept that our holistic inheritance will never provide us with enough benefits to justify the costs we must endure, and chose to exit this stage. Those who will deny us the right to do so are motivated by their selfish egotistical interests. They exercise their power through religious dogma which asserts suicide is a sin which will be punished in the next or after life. In the past they punished the families of the dead person. Thus they produced a motive to endure lives not worth living, so called 'fates worse than death'. It is time to assert our liberty as free citizens and demand the right to Nembutal, or Nitrogen gas, a 'peaceful pill' or 'Drion's pill'. Until we have this right, we are all slaves to the beneficiary classes.

The birth-control pill made it possible to manage our reproduction. We now require an 'end of life pill'. We require an end to the effective slavery that denying us euthanasia represents. We all have a right to holistically informed consent. Sects which threaten their members with fates worse than death must be called to account. Threatening people with eternal damnation is a form of violence. It must be criminalized.

What motivation to sacrifice simple pleasures?

What motivation does average person have to sacrifice the few pleasures available to them, such as fast food, junk food, alcohol, drugs, and random sex? What would justify this sacrifice? To merely live a bit healthier and longer? What sort of life would that be? What else does life have to offer them but these simple pleasures? Why be bored, miserable and hungry? Most people will never experience success, romantic love, wealth, fame, privilege or luxury. Living longer, just to be useful for the beneficiary classes is hardly a motive.

TROONATNOOR: EUGENICS

False optimism re-produces misery

Giving people false hope may be motivated by compassion, and more importantly it leaves us feeling better, as if we had made a positive contribution to someone's wellbeing. However it also leads to whatever suffering we are trying to ease being reproduced endlessly, over generations. Thus it is irresponsible, unless we at the same time prevent it being reproduced. Intoxicating hope is satisfying, but what is required when it comes to reproduction is sobriety.

Perhaps the main obstacle my Protocols face is the unrealistic reckoning of personal chances, the harboring of false hopes, unwarranted optimism, the denial of reality, of our real life chances. Offering people holistically informed consent will deal with their ignorance, but not their emotional desires, their 'will to denial, repression, and 'wishful thinking', including a faith in karma and that ultimately all things are for best.

No matter how compelling we present the arguments against determinism, no matter how well we highlight the absurdity of the notion of 'free' will, people will insist on believing what they want to be true. They do not want to face reality sober. They demand their intoxicating myths, their satisfying illusions. They insist on their right to flight to fantasy. In reality most of us are living for a future payoff that will never come, and reproducing our own misery in the process.

Escapism is good, as a relief from reality, as a distraction, a 'time out'. However the problem is that all forms of media tend to offer only escapism. As such it comes to form a social reality for most people. They imagine that life is made up of perfect relationships, happy endings, rags to riches success stories, efficacious violence, and justice. Religion is of course the original and ultimate form of escapism. In films people fight without getting hurt, walk away from exciting car chases and car crashes, and violence is efficacious and aesthetic.

Our hero always survives. Justice is done. In reality violence is ugly and the strongest and most ruthless defeat the weaker, no matter how just their cause. Millions of people are mangled in bloody, horrific car accidents every year. And most lives are, to the trained eye, slow motion car accidents. Collectively seen, society is a slow motion train wreck. The outcomes are as predictable. We insist on people wearing seat-belts. People accept this regulation of their private lives. It is time to adopt the same rational approach, based on our emotional empathy with the future victims, to reproduction.

The responsible and optimal management of reproduction: eugenics

When I talk about eugenics, I am not talking about constructing artificial human beings, or tinkering with our genetic makeup. Of course negative selection has taken millions of years of incremental mutation. The advantage and disadvantage of particular traits constantly changes, according to changes in our environment, and our organism as a whole. We cannot predict what traits will be advantageous to us in the future. In the past the ability to find and store fat was an asset. Today it is a liability. The same may perhaps be said of fertility, or a high sex drive. I don't believe we should be considering manipulating our genes at the genetic level until we understand what we are doing much better than we do. What I do feel is compelling is an approach at the level of reproduction.

To promote the reproduction of qualities which will ensure our offspring the best life experiences we can offer them, we should manage the process of reproduction.

How might it work in practice? It could take different shapes. We could merely seek to persuade people with a negative inheritance not to reproduce. This would be a very optimistic approach, assuming the same level of enlightenment and principle-directed reason in all people. A more effective approach would be to make contraception automatic. To make infertility the 'natural' state. Conception could only then take place with external intervention. This could take the form of implants, implanted during the onset of puberty, which would need to be neutralized before conception could take place.

This would ensure that all conception was planned, and that the people involved could not deny responsibility. Everyone would have to approach conception with full responsibility. No-one could claim they were not responsible. No-one could deny responsibility, by saying they were drunk, or the condom broke, or the antibiotics must have interfered with the pill.

This would be the lowest level of management, the avoidance of unplanned pregnancies.

Many unfortunate pregnancies are of this nature. It would also eliminate the sad practice of abortion, which in some cases is little less than the murder of the unborn. People would have to go into their conception and family planning with their eyes wide open, knowing that they will never be able to deny their moral responsibility to themselves or to their community. At this level, people would still have the right to decide for themselves, to the good or detriment of the not yet conceived. It would merely eliminate the element of unplanned reproduction.

An approach that could provide more justice and greater chances for positive life experiences for the not yet conceived would be to take the decision to reproduce away from the individual. The decision would be made collectively. The process would of course not be arbitrary, or based on any current vested interests. The criteria used would refer to the inheritance the not yet conceived would receive. Only those whose genetic inheritance would be a boon to the not yet conceived would be allowed to reproduce. The referent for the decision making process would be the not-yet-conceived themselves.

In order not to deny people the positive experience of parenthood, this may mean that some people without the genetic credentials would be allowed to parent the offspring of others. This could occur either through natural conception and adoption, or through the adoption of fertilized ovum, or sperm and ovum, in the instance that only one part of the couple are inappropriate genetic donor material. This would allow them to enjoy the full joys of parenthood, at less cost to their not yet conceived children. The children would have the benefits of loving parents, and an optimal genetic inheritance.

This would not of course guarantee an optimal socio-cultural-economic-parental-etc. inheritance. That would only be achieved where the collective limited the experience of direct parenthood to those with the optimal socio-cultural-parental potential to pass on, and where the society justly distributed its material and social resources. Those people who were not potential parents could still nurture and care for children as day carers, tutors, trainers, teachers and so on. They could still develop rewarding relationships with children. They could express their love and care in many ways. They could still be important parts of the children's lives.

A still higher level of management would allow for an even greater optimisation of genetic inheritances, and therefore positive life experiences for the not yet conceived. Sperm and ovum could be taken from every member of society, and stored. The development of the donors could be monitored, to see what advantageous and disadvantageous properties or characteristics developed in them. They may for instance possess definitive genius or talent, but later in life reveal terrible flaws and diseases. It may well be that many characteristics jump one generation. The grandparents might be better indicators than the parents.

At some point we may be able to detect all manner of characteristics directly from the parent's and grandparent's genes. This would allow a better realization of the intention of providing the not yet conceived with the best possible opportunities and potentials for positive life experiences that we can. This means that not only could we ensure equal opportunities in our society, we could enhance the chance of each member being able to fully benefit from them.

None of this would require an invasion into our genes, and therefore the unknowable risks involved. We could wait and see what genetic predispositions we had. We would not have to know beforehand. Conception would take place after we knew. This level of management of course assumes that a technology would be available for the storing of sperm and ovum, without damage to them, or to the not-yet- conceived. Of course to implement this scheme no generation would be able to reproduce itself. It would be reproducing the optimal genetic inheritance that could be 'harvested' from the previous generations. In this way the current couple would be having the children of their parents, so to speak.

It would be ideal if we could optimize a person's DNA after conception and birth, but we are unlikely to ever possess such technology, and its development would pose huge ethical risks, so it is probably best that we don't even begin down that road.

Genetic and social engineering's horrific public relations problems

Social and genetic engineering have suffered from extremely bad public relations. Many authors have exclusively presented the worst case scenario as the definitive example of social engineering. Where they have presented both potential sides, it is the negative that has left the lasting impression. Perhaps fear is more powerful than hope. Most fiction leaves us with a dystopian vision of the abuse of social and genetic engineering, where ruling elites merely engineer an even more exploitative social system. Such abuses as an intrinsic, necessary, and defining property of social and genetic engineering have become hegemonic in the popular culture. This is the 'straw man' the opponents of holistically enlightened social and genetic engineering refer to when assuming they have proven their argument.

The utopias that are presented are so naive and such products of their authors limited imagination, zeitgeist, and narrow cultural conditioning, that even they deride the very notion of utopia, and so do as much damage as the 'straw man'. The utopias presented are whimsical, wishful thinking, often misinformed more by dogma than they are informed by enlightened holistic awareness. It is no wonder that the very notion of engineering a utopia is regarded with derision within the hegemonic popular culture.

The ethical foundations of social and genetic engineering

The ethical superiority of social and genetic engineering, in its noble form, is that it considers the interests of all members of society. Interests and principles are considered indivisible, universal, and inclusive. In the case of eugenics and the regulation of reproduction, it is inclusive of the interests of future, not-yet-persons. This is in contrast to conventional politics in which minorities competitively pursue their narrow self-interests at each other's expense, and more so, the expense of the masses who cannot actively participate in the process. Of course the 'not-yet-persons' represent the greatest part of this non-participatory majority. They are 'disenfranchised' from the political process. This generally means that a relatively small number of people will benefit at the expense of the majority.

To comprehend what this means we must consider the opportunity costs. Of course in the advanced western economies the majority of people have seen material and social improvements over the last few centuries, so it cannot be said that the transactional interactions have been zero sum. Both the privileged minorities and the underprivileged masses have benefited from interactions. However, what has been lost to the masses is the alternative societies that may have arisen had the powerful allowed them to.

All the alternative relationships and systems of meaning, including production and distribution, have been forfeited. In other words, what has been lost is the even greater good that might have been generated. The same applies to arguments about military research spending being productive as it generates spin offs like microwave ovens, Teflon, radar, and other technologies that benefit the population generally.

This specious sophistry neglects to consider what even greater benefits could have been produced, had the resources been directly invested in peaceful technologies, with such benefits as their direct aims. Always keep in mind that the real cost of anything is the opportunity cost, the alternative production or value lost as a result of the decision to devote resources to any particular production or consumption.

Ensuring everyone has a life worth living

The first step in social engineering must be the management of reproduction, so that only the most intelligent, attractive, and above all, healthy people reproduce. The second step would be to rearrange the whole culture of parenting and socialization. The institution of the family has not demonstrated itself to be generally efficacious at providing the optimal cultural capital, and emotional and financial resources, required to guarantee each child a life justifiable in itself. Quite simply, it is a 'moral' imperative not to have children unless it can be reasonably predicted that they will have a rewarding and satisfying life. It is absolutely immoral to have children in order to improve the lives of others. The only interests that should be considered with reference to non-existing persons, or the not-yet-conceived, are the interest of these not-yet-conceived persons. The referent for all decisions regarding reproduction must be those who will be conceived as a result.

Denial

Denial is a property of human psychology. Humans have a tendency to attempt to deny the value of properties they do not themselves have. In this way, it is common to hear people make comments deriding the notion of having a world full of beautiful, intelligent, healthy, and talented people. It is not unusual for people to feel threatened and defensive about their own lack of particular qualities. They often attempt to devalue these particular qualities, in an attempt to deflect a negative definition from being applied to themselves. Being defined negatively represents the threat of rejection, exclusion, and abandonment, and ultimately death, in the depths of the human psyche. And remember, reproducing yourself is merely reproducing the previous people you inherited your genes from. You are a mere vehicle for other people's DNA. These others are all those you inherited 'your' DNA from.

Diversity lobbyists

Deaf people convince themselves that being deaf is superior, so that they can overcome their own doubts, which are later repressed and denied, about whether they can justify reproducing themselves, knowing that their children are likely to be born deaf as well. Remember we rationalize our desires. If we want to reproduce, we will 'spin' everything to find a way to justify doing so. We will find some way to justify doing what we want to do. Our motive to reproduce is selfish. The motives of the beneficiary classes to coerce others to reproduce is the most selfish of all desires, to get others to exist to serve your interests, knowing what a high cost they are likely to pay.

Everyone who wants to reproduce themselves will 'spin' everything to find some way to justify satisfying this selfish desire. This is human nature. Few people would benefit from seat-belts if they were not coerced. Few people would slow down around schools and built-up areas without speed cameras, speeding fines, the threats of the loss of their driving privileges, and most of all, 'speed-bumps' and other 'traffic calming measures'. Often we have to be 'cruel to be kind'.

Reproductive response-ability

I saw a television documentary which followed the life of chronic pain and constant surgery of a woman born with a cleft palate. As the grown woman cries and waits with fearful anticipation to see if her baby has been born with the same problem, I am appalled. She knew that her baby stood a very high chance of being born with a cleft palate, and having to endure everything she went through. However she stubbornly and for me, irresponsibly, went ahead reproduced herself, taking that risk. She never asked her not-yet-conceived child what it wanted. The child was powerless to give or withhold informed consent. The risk was totally unnecessary and avoidable. No crying now is going to ease her child's suffering. My mind just boggles at human nature. So many women today insist on the right to reproduce themselves, despite knowing in advance that they stand to burden their child with all manner of diseases and problems. It is just pure selfishness. Of course few will dare regulate their actions, for fear that they themselves might be deprived of their right to reproduce.

Motivations for reproduction

Many children are conceived 'accidentally', against the wishes of at least one of the participants in the sex act. Those that are conceived intentionally are done so out of various motives. Children give the parents a sense of purpose. They give them someone they assume they will love, and who will love them. They expand their social circle.

Many women find the attention paid to pregnant and new mothers very satisfying. Children give adults their own world to be dictator of, to control. They often entertain delusions that they have 'wisdom' to pass onto their children. However this is usually merely absurd, fatuous, religious dogma. Children present parents with a 'second-chance' to achieve all the things they never managed to in their own lives. In this way children offer the chance to live vicariously.

Of course in many society's children are the only form of 'old age insurance', and represent their only chance at improving their economic situation in the long run, even if in the short-run it forces them into greater poverty. In some society's the beneficiary classes have managed to have reproduction defined as the highest virtue for women, and a sign of masculinity for men, to encourage people to reproduce more value producers, soldiers, and tax-payers. Even in developed nations politicians seek to encourage people to reproduce to simply pass on the problems produced by their own economic and social policies to the next generations.

As a young man I actually felt an 'obligation' to reproduce. This indicates how powerful the hegemonic system of definitions is at determining our attitudes towards reproduction. The family is defined as the basis of society. To be a good citizen you must be a mother or 'family-man'. Especially for women, reproduction satisfies this sensual desire to enjoy the company of babies and small children. They can be quite adorable in a way that few adults or older children can be. All baby animals share this power over us.

Thus the typically stronger female desire to enjoy the sensual delights of babies and small children is in no way 'morally' superior to the typical stronger male desire for random, casual, meaningless, unconditional sex. Babies and family only take on their 'moral' character and produce 'moral' sentiments as derivative of all the other motives previously mentioned. People love babies for these reasons. They provide all these benefits. However the reason those with no inclination are coerced to reproduce is simply to serve the interests of the beneficiary classes, who, while they may love their own children for any of the above reasons, have absolutely no concern for the interests of children that are conceived as a result of their actions.

The most loathsome attitude I have observed is that of women who manage to get pregnant against the wishes of their partner, imagining that all men simply need a little 'push' to become fathers, but that once they are, they are happy. The beneficiary classes employ noble lies and social pressure. The women simply employ more direct deception. Of course they use emotional blackmail and sexual coercion to compel unwilling males into becoming fathers. Remember that women realize they will get to keep the children, and the state will force men to pay for their maintenance, after divorce.

What they fail to consider is the interests of their children. Children need fathers. Women have managed to define themselves as victims of motherhood and divorce, but I suspect that, at least unconsciously, they are quite calculating in their behaviors, in their drive to satisfy their selfish desires. It is time to put all our cards on the table and to bring transparency and response-ability to the most important area of life, that of reproduction.

Hypocrisy regarding eugenics

People seek out the most intelligent, attractive, talented, healthy, adapted, and successful mates. We judge potential mates on the exact same principles eugenics does. We practice eugenics as far as our holistic inheritance allows. We negatively select as far as we can. We are only limited by our own holistic inheritance. Therefore we practice eugenics within the limits of our own holistic leverage. We would all mate with more attractive, more intelligent, healthier, more well-adapted, more successful people if we could.

All that managed reproduction and officially regulated and transparent eugenics programs would do, is ensure that we all behaved 'as if' we were able to attract the ideal mates. Currently people reduce their standards out of necessity. They cannot exercise their own instinct for eugenics at the moment. However the instinct is there. People merely deny it, as it conflicts with their instinct to mate, their desire for sex, babies, and the positive feelings and pleasures associated with mating. In many cases it is merely a means to avoid the displeasure of being alone and unable to satisfy their sexual and emotional needs in any way. All of this is implicit, and so most people are unaware of it, and can simply deny it.

All Eugenics means in reality is denying people the option of 'settling' for less than they really desire. It would prevent people from lowering their standards. Eugenics is in fact the closest thing to 'moral' action, as it considers the interests of people who do not yet exist. As thus it cannot be considered 'selfish' or egotistical. The interests being served are those of not-yet-conceived people. As the referent of our decisions is not us or ours, it approximates a truly 'moral' action.

Characteristics most of us would chose if we could

We must define what desirable objectives social and genetic engineering could take on, before we can develop the appropriate technologies and sets of social relationships and processes with which to pursue them. We must, then, define the minimum criteria under which a life would be justifiable in itself, and then establish what sets of social relationships and processes would facilitate such a life. Implicit in this is to determine what sort of genetic, cultural, and socio-historic capital a person needs in order to be able to pursue an intrinsically satisfying and rewarding life.

Health, beauty, intelligence, a positive personality, equitable social relations in which all people enjoy real relative equality, meritocracy in which rewards are directly related to effort and sacrifice rather than the luck of 'inheritance', a society that values love, creativity, truth, solidarity, and beauty, well, that might be a start.

Beauty is anything *but* superficial

Beauty reflects health, muscle tone, functionality in terms of clear large eyes and long, functionally proportioned limbs, the absence of any excessive, non-functional flesh or fat, and so on. Hume showed how our definition of another person's qualities as 'beautiful', ultimately derives from the utility we imagine these things to provide to their possessor, based on our own desire to possess these qualities. Beauty reflects strength, power, endurance, health, and fitness. The lack of scars indicates no past accidents, or worse, illnesses which are possibly still contagious.

We could *become* gene robots?

During a recent television documentary concerning genetic engineering, a Geneticist voiced his fear that we could become gene robots. That a scientist whose entire job is to study how genes determine our life experience could make such a perversely ironic statement is a source of exasperating frustration. It is an example of how people are capable of selectively compartmentalizing experience, to deny connections, and avoid logical conclusions.

This scientist apparently does not wish to recognize the reality of genetic determination. He was of course opposed to gene technology advances such as cloning, and genetic engineering. His position, as a religious person, and based on the dogma of the church, was that only god has the power to decide such things. Of course if only god has such power then he has nothing to fear, as we won't ever be able to decide for ourselves. Of course we are gene robots. That a geneticist of all people could manage to avoid this recognition says volumes for human nature.

Watson, along with Crick, is credited with discovering DNA. Watson is in favor of genetic engineering. He is opposed to what he calls 'genetic injustice'. Eugenics has a long tradition going back to at least the 1920s in the U.S. Eugenics is unfortunately associated in most people's minds with racist ideologies. It must be remembered that eugenics is about filtering out negative genetic traits. It is only racists who define 'racial' characteristics as negative. Eugenics has a bad reputation that is undeserved. As Watson also notes, people are loathe to define themselves as inferior. This motivates them to deny the very notion of inferiority. It is most likely this inferiority complex which motivates them to attempt to inextricably link eugenics with racism and Nazism.

If it was negative associations with the Nazi pogroms that were the real problem with the public attitudes towards eugenics, then Moses and Joshua would have discredited god and religion. In god's name they committed mass genocide, rape, and enslavement. That Moses is held up as a heroic 'moral' leader attests to people's ability to forget associations, or be very very selective indeed with those they do make.

No, public attitudes towards eugenics are based on more personal fears that have nothing to do with racist Nazi pogroms. What the opponents of eugenics really fear is that they, themselves, will be defined as inferior. They fear that eugenics would rule them out of reproducing themselves. People don't fear 'race' based eugenics at all. Most people are racist. The victims of race discrimination are as racist as the perpetrators of race discrimination.

Prejudice and discrimination merely represent the opportunistic exploitation of any difference to gain an advantage at another's expense. By defining someone as other, inferior, even non-human, we nominally legitimate exploiting them. We numb our sense of empathy by defining them as morally deserving of exploitation. This also allows us to build up our own self-esteem, by 'putting down' others.

What people really fear is being defined personally as inferior. Eugenics, like any 'principle' driven philosophy, potentially 'threatens' everyone, inclusively and universally. Racism, even sexism, and all other 'isms' are general, and exclude more people than they 'target'. Principle based eugenics reaches across all ethnic, 'race', socioeconomic-status, and religious boundaries. This means that all the exclusive groups share the same 'threat'. They will therefore share a consensus opinion that eugenics is 'bad'. The members of otherwise antagonistic groups will insist on everyone else's rights to reproduce merely to protect their own selfish desire to reproduce.

The philosopher, who discriminates according to principles that cut across all boundaries, rather than being merely species-*ist*, racist, sexist, and dogmatist, will be defined as a common enemy. Principles are universal and inclusive. There are more dumb, ugly, unhealthy, unprincipled, opportunistic exploiters of inherited inequality, than there are Jews, or Negroes, or Asians, or Americans, or communists, or Aryans, or women, or men, or blind people and so on. The philosopher is therefore more 'threatening' than any group based on any narrow definition of 'inferiority'.

The philosopher applies their compelling arguments in principle, without favor or impartiality, or even malice. They cannot be 'bought' as 'allies' by any group. Therefore everyone feels potentially vulnerable to them. Vulnerability to a lie is limited to those the lies are about. Everyone is vulnerable to 'the truth'. It doesn't

discriminate according to sex, age, ethnic group, skin color, nationality, or socio-economic group, and so on. Everyone is inclusively and universally vulnerable to having their specious arguments interrogated and exposed.

Eugenics

Eugenics, comes from the Greek for 'good breeding' Plato advises, in 'The Republic', that the government should covertly manage reproduction so that 'The best men must have intercourse with the best women as frequently as possible, and the opposite is true of the very inferior. George Bernard Shaw wrote that 'The world is populated in the main by people who should not exist.'

Beginning in 1896 many U.S states enacted marriage laws prohibiting anyone who was 'epileptic, imbecile or feeble-minded' from marrying. Beginning in 1907 and continuing until 1963, over 64,000 individuals were forcibly sterilized in the United States. In the 1920's alone 40,000 'mentally ill' women were sterilized in the U.S as part of its official 'eugenics' program defined as 'the self-direction of human evolution'. Eugenics was an academic discipline at many colleges and universities. High school and college textbooks from the 1920s, 30s, and 40s often had chapters touting the scientific progress to be gained from applying eugenic principles to the population.

During the 1930s and 1940s the Nazi regime forcibly sterilized over 450,000 people including 'hereditary and incurable drunkards, sexual criminals, lunatics, and those suffering from an incurable disease which would be passed on to their offspring...'. Nazi's on trial at Nuremberg cited the U.S as their inspiration.

Alexander Graham Bell, George Bernard Shaw, and Winston Churchill were among the earliest supporters of eugenics. Canada carried out thousands of forced sterilizations, and these lasted into the 1970s. Sweden forcibly sterilized 62,000 'unfits', primarily the mentally ill, over a forty-year period. Australia, the UK, Norway, France, Finland, Denmark, Estonia, Iceland, and Switzerland, had programs to sterilize people the government declared to be mentally deficient.

Negative Eugenic measures against many diseases are being undertaken in societies around the world. The effects of diseases are essentially wholly negative, and societies everywhere seek to reduce their impact by various means, some of which are eugenic in all but name. Potential targets for modification through human genetic engineering have included intelligence, depression, schizophrenia, alcoholism, sexual behavior (and orientation) criminality, and 'race'.

Race has been discounted as a social construct, after scientific research proved that the differences within the putative 'races' was in fact greater than that between the putative 'races'. Whereas a few decades ago homosexuality was defined as a mental illness, today few informed, educated people would consider it a 'defect' as such. The majority of people with the gene markers associated with mental illness never develop any symptoms of mental illness. In any case, many of the world's greatest leaders, thinkers, writers, philosophers, musicians, and scientific geniuses suffered from manic depression. Thus 'race', sexual orientation, and most forms of mental illness would not be considered relevant to modern eugenics.

The notion of what traits should be reproduced and which should be eliminated is of course problematic. Eugenics is open to abuse at the hands of misguided, unenlightened, bigoted, racist, sexist, sexual-orientationist and prejudiced people. However this makes it no different from any other tool or technology that as ever been at our disposal. 1.2 million people die in car accidents each year. It is a question of how you employ a tool. There is nothing intrinsically good or bad about any tool. A tool is merely a means to ends.

In 1994 China passed the 'Maternal and Infant Health Care Law' requiring mandatory pre-marital screenings for serious 'genetic diseases and relevant mental disease.' Those diagnosed with such diseases may not marry unless they agree to 'long term contraceptive measures' or sterilization.

A similar screening policy began in the 1970s is intended to reduce the incidence of thalassemia on the island of Cyprus.

In Israel the government fund genetic testing. If an unborn baby is diagnosed with Tay-Sachs the pregnancy may be terminated, subject to (the mother's) consent. Most other Ashkenazi Jewish communities also run screening programs due to the higher incidence of this disease among their members.

In some Jewish communities, the ancient custom of matchmaking (shidduch) is still practiced. In seeking to prevent the tragedy of infant death which always results from being homozygous for Tay-Sachs, Dor Yeshorim test young couples to check whether they carry a risk of passing on this disease or certain other fatal conditions. If both the young man and young woman are Tay-Sachs carriers, it is common for the match to be broken off.

A recent court case in the U.K, *Crown v. James Edward Whittaker-Williams*, set a precedent of banning sexual contact between people with 'learning difficulties', using the 2003 Sexual Offenses Act and arguing that such people cannot give their consent to the sexual advances of another. Such cases are considered to be 'crypto'-eugenic.

Many see the near future of Positive Eugenics in reproductive technologies which enable the production of 'designer babies'. This technology will be private, and only available to the wealthiest parents. There will be no state coercion. The 'consumers' of this technology will be motivated by competitiveness and the desire to provide their children with the best genetic inheritances and life chances.

The famous Geneticist Watson has argued that: 'Once you have a way in which you can improve our children, no one can stop it.' Like all technologies, it will probably become less expensive and more and more accessible to more and more people, as the technology develops and becomes more affordable. Once one group of people start using such technologies, their peers will have little choice but to follow, or be left to suffer a competitive disadvantage.

We could reasonably expect that the technology would initially simply reinforce genetic-socio-economic-cultural inequality. However it has the potential, if universal access is achieved, of reducing genetic inequality, and making socio-economic-cultural equality defined by meritocracy more likely. Perhaps some dictatorial regime might attempt a modern eugenics program, such as the one in North Korea. Perhaps the Chinese will begin a program with state incentives and disincentives similar to those associated with its current 'one child policy'. Of course first it would need to change cultural attitudes which have already, under that policy, produced a major imbalance in the number of girls to boys.

We must remember that we all implicitly practice eugenics when we seek the most attractive, healthy, intelligent, talented, competent, successful partners we can. The only real difference is that most people will accept the best they can find, even if that 'best' is of really poor quality. Their focus, their priority, is on reproducing themselves *per se*. So the difference is how 'choosy' we ultimately are in our personal eugenics. Most people assume they have a 'right' to reproduce, independent of the quality of the genetic inheritance they are likely to burden their offspring with. So any moves by the state to promote selective breeding would require a great deal of social intervention. It would only work if sterilization was the norm, and all reproduction required state intervention to take place at all.

The majority of people have been against every form of regulation of their 'private' lives by the state. Thus most of these regulations were unobtrusive. As Plato recommended, most states have introduced their 'controls' in the form of 'noble lies' attached to religious dogma. Laws proscribing everything from usury to drink-driving have been introduced. Ultimately the people have accepted these regulations of their 'private' lives. Reproductive responsibility is already the norm among the most educated and enlightened.

When seat-belts were first introduced, it was the same demographic that took advantage of them. The masses required disincentives such as fines to motivate their responsible behavior. Self-regulation has proven unreliable in relation to the masses. People are not generally convinced by compelling arguments. Everyone feels they are exceptions to the rule. People act on their emotional impulses.

As people are emotional about money, and freedom, they tend to comply with prescriptions and proscriptions if disincentives and deterrents are associated with them. They are less likely to respond positively to compelling arguments, scientific evidence, or statistics. However once people act in a certain way, they tend to rationalize their actions in terms of compelling arguments. Read 'Convergences' for details.

No-one wants to have definitions placed on them which they feel might reduce their status or privileges. The autism rights movement is a case in point. Claiming autism as a form of 'neuro-diversity', it opposes moves to

eliminate the autism genotype. This would make quadriplegia a form of 'mobility-diversity', blindness a form of 'visual-diversity', ugliness as a form of 'aesthetic-diversity', and congenital stupidity a form of 'intellectual diversity'. Of course not all diversity is positive. Poverty, illness, ignorance, ugliness, and disease, are all forms of diversity which enlightened people would seek to eliminate. There will be enough diversity within a healthy, intelligent, attractive population to avoid any fears of catastrophic homogeneity.

Gene testing kits for all manner of inheritable genetic diseases and tendencies are already available 'over the counter', even over the internet. The term 'genetic passport' has been recently coined. Insurance companies have a real incentive to calculate risks and thus the potential costs of insuring their potential policy holders. Currently they offer those people who voluntarily undergo 'screening' discounts on insurance premiums.

They cannot legally refuse to cover or re-insure anyone already insured with them. However they can use the information collected for epidemiological statistics which, together with information gathered via gene banks, to develop indicators for who is likely to suffer particular gene-related diseases over the course of their lives. They could use this information in the future to determine insurance premiums according to such genetic risk factors. Of course many oppose such practices, for fear of being disadvantaged by them.

Some would argue for greater 'solidarity', however solidarity implies responsibilities towards others, and not just privileges for yourself. It would be unfair to punish people for the 'sins' of their parents. However where they deliberately reproduce genetic problems out of stubborn selfishness, they are destroying the basis of solidarity. By denying the not yet conceived genetic justice, they are undermining the principle of justice.

At the same time they are undermining the basis of solidarity, by behaving irresponsibly. People do not feel goodwill towards others whose willfully irresponsible behavior imposes costs on them. Thus the selfish and irresponsible undermine one of the most important bases of solidarity, goodwill. If people insist on reproductive irresponsibility, they will alienate the reproductively responsible.

They will undermine any motive for solidarity in terms of public health and education. People will be unwilling to 'subsidize' other people's lack of responsibility, their reproductive 'recalcitrance'. This will widen the health-care and education apartheid that already exists in most of the world. Those with the most fortunate holistic inheritances will opt out of the public health and education systems.

They will be unwilling to finance state health-care and education via higher taxes. State coercion of reproductive responsibility can be anticipated as soon as the reproduction of the masses represents costs to the beneficiary classes. At the moment it still represents a net benefit.

Why Eugenics is the prerequisite to optimizing our life experiences

It is always us and ours. Our wives, our children, our family, our company, our tribe, our ethnic group, our country, our profession, our pets, and other animals that appeal to us, that are our referents in cost-benefit analyses. Any attempt to promote universal justice, solidarity, and positive life experience must appeal to and respect individual self-interest if it is to have any chance of success.

Ideals are good for dreams, utopian visions, and idealistic masturbation, but they can never produce the outcomes of an 'optimal' society as they are not consistent with TROONATNOOR. You can't fight reality. You have to work with it. It is not productive to try to perfect what can by nature never be perfected. What is productive is to seek to optimize from the available opportunities.

Eugenics should not be seen as disapproving of people as they are. This is the reason for most people's defensiveness and resistance to the idea of eugenics. Eugenics is about wanting the next generation to experience the best possible life experiences that we can offer them. Most people's rejection of Eugenics is reflexive of their own insecurity. They feel threatened by any notions that beauty and intelligence represent qualitative superiority. They fear they will be rejected, disapproved of, not accepted, and ultimately rejected, excluded, and abandoned.

In fact, under my 'Protocols', the only thing they might be excluded from is procreating and reproducing themselves. This would only occur in the event that they did not possess genetic qualities that a society guided by holistically enlightened principles would wish its next generation to enjoy. And this principle would in no way deny those people denied the privilege of reproducing themselves access to experiencing parenthood.

It may well be the beautiful, talented, intelligent and healthy people of the current generation who will be the first to reassure the less fortunate that eugenics is 'evil'. These people are opportunistically exploiting their genetic advantages, whether consciously or otherwise, to appropriate privileges and benefits from the less fortunate. Such people selfishly wish to maintain their competitive advantages, and for their own children to benefit from the same competitive advantage.

Few people in history have ever given up their inherited advantages or privileges. The same people that will oppose eugenics on these grounds, are the same who oppose increased spending on public health-care and education. Their referent in opposing eugenics, and the responsible regulation of reproduction, is always themselves, and their own interests. Their motivation in opposing eugenics is not empathy for the people who would be denied the privilege of reproducing themselves. They do not have their interests at heart. They simply wish to retain their genetic competitive advantage. The wish to be able to continue to opportunistically exploit genetic inequality, genetic injustice, to their own ends, the satisfaction of their own desires.

The intelligent and beautiful do not have to do the hard, dirty, mundane, and unrewarding work that underpins their lifestyles of excitement, fascination, privilege, comfort, approval, inclusion, reward, and satisfaction. That work is done by the less fortunate. The hegemonic system defines this as normal, as god given, as perhaps unfortunate or unfair for some, but unavoidable.

That's just the way it is! The intelligent and beautiful inhabit the circles of power and privilege that produce the system under which they can exploit, directly and passively, this 'unfortunate' situation. The victims would do the same as the perpetrators, given the chance. The situation is not merely unfortunate or unavoidable. It is deliberately reproduced.

The insecurity of the exploited and less privileged is exploited by the privileged exploiters. They are 'taught' that the only real meaning of life is to reproduce, in the hope that their offspring will justify the suffering they endure. They are deluded that their offspring will be upwardly mobile, in a meritocratic society that rewards work and effort.

Most people deny their own faults. They avoid externally defining themselves as ugly or dumb or untalented, or even genetically inferior. Everyone else plays along with this fiction. It becomes the social reality. We delude

ourselves, and allow ourselves to be deluded, that we are not inferior, that our children will be beautiful and healthy and talented and go on to live the lives that we had wished for ourselves.

Where the contrary reality is so compelling that it cannot be denied, instead of lying to ourselves and consuming lies about 'upward mobility' and meritocracy, we deny the value of a better life. It was good enough for my parents, it was good enough for me, it will be good enough for my kids! This allows them to repress the real guilt they feel for having forced a life onto their offspring which is not really worth living. Some people are even so damaged and twisted that they actually wish to impose their own life of unfulfillment, misery, and boredom on their children, children who were not sufficiently grateful for having been conceived, grateful for all the 'sacrifices' their parents had made for them!

The real sacrifice that many parents could have made would have been to deny themselves their selfish desire to reproduce themselves. Good parents do not use their children as a means to attempt to give positive meaning to their own lives. This treats people as means to ends. This is the definition of slavery.

The condition of comparative advantage reflexive of beauty, intelligence, talent, and physical superiority, would evaporate under a situation of real equality. Where we all benefited from a more or less equal inheritance, we would have no comparative advantage over each other, to be opportunistically exploited in our narrow self-interests. No-one could dominate another, or mystify and manipulate them. We would all share the same obligations and duties, and enjoy the same benefits and opportunities. The costs and benefits would be equally shared.

The definitions and systems of relations of the culture would reflect this, and reflexively take on a totally different nature. The current relations of inequality of genetic and social inheritance are based of course on inequality. That inequality allows the beneficiaries of greater genetic and social resources to define things in ways that serve their own perceived interests. Systems of relationships and institutions reflexively emerge from these definitions. They become hegemonic. They are passively reproduced by the masses, and actively reproduced, iteratively reinforced, and fine-tuned, by each new generation of dominant, hegemonic, beneficiary classes.

Where all participants in a society had a more or less equal genetic inheritance, they would be forced to negotiate amongst themselves a more or less just and fair distribution of labor and reward. They would define work as the source of all value. They would have no 'less fortunate' people to dominate and exploit. They would find that no-one was willing to do some jobs. They would find that they were not really necessary anyway. They would engineer ways of meeting real needs that allowed them to be met without dangerous, unhealthy, or alienating work processes.

Things that would be defined as necessary and unavoidable under the condition of basic inequality, would be redefined as unnecessary, unacceptable, and more tellingly avoidable, under conditions of basic equality. The definitions of what is fair, just, necessary, and avoidable, are all reflexive of the systems of relations, and the presence of absence of inequality to opportunistically exploit.

There would be little background, ubiquitous, insidious violence, and hence less violence in general. Everyone would have similar opportunities. Australian social research indicates that around 25% of females, and 12% of males, have experienced some form of abuse. However such statistics are problematic. Females may be more likely than boys to seek help, and to admit to such abuse. This is one way in which the ubiquitous background violence of our current society is expressed. Violent acts are the expression of violence that has been experienced. Victims become perpetrators whose victims become perpetrators and so on.

Everyone would know that they had more or less similar capabilities, and could achieve more or less the same. This would motivate them to put in the effort. They would naturally be rewarded for that effort, and hard work would be ensured. Everyone would basically approve of themselves, and therefore everyone else. Everyone would feel as secure as it is possible to be on this planet. They would share a basic level of insecurity which would draw them together for mutual support and protection and nurturing. They would have no use for prisons and legal systems, as the very endemic systemic conflicts and violence that produced most crime would no longer exist. There

would be no massive inequality of wealth. It would be impossible to opportunistically take advantage of other's inherited inequalities. No systematic inequality and 'communities' of privilege and exploitation would exist.

Eugenics in its wider holistic context

True spiritualism would replace religion. We would experience our own 'wholeness', a true acceptance and approval of our complete selves. We would become whole. We would enjoy real communities of approval and acceptance. We would be accepting of each other. We would be secure enough to validate qualitative superiority without feeling personally threatened. We would have a real sense of belonging. We would be motivated by a feeling that we were working towards ever increasing justice and material improvements for everyone.

We would be intrinsically motivated by the knowledge that everyone shared the same fundamental values. Our efforts would be leveraged to produce real value. This value would be fairly distributed according to effort. There would be some inequality, to reward extra effort and sacrifice. However the difference would be that we would all be working towards reducing real inequality.

There would be no junk production. Costs and benefits would be shared. The referent of all action would be every individual. We would all be committed to ensuring that following generations would receive the optimal inheritances we could manage. No one would be systematically excluded from this 'whole'. The true mission of the prophets would be realized. We would all share the experience of being whole, of being part of a whole.

This is not a utopian vision, it is a scientifically compelling one. The current dystopias are not a necessary and defining characteristic of the human condition. We have been taught by the insecure and greedy dominant hegemonic elites that it is. Maybe they even believe it themselves. Or they manage to convince themselves, to avoid feeling bad about themselves. The possibilities of the human condition are much more open than we have been brainwashed to suspect.

It is only those that dare to challenge, and seek to inform themselves, that will become aware of this reality. Before you will do that, you will have to dream. You have to be able to imagine that life could be so much better for most people than it currently is. You won't seek if you don't suspect you may find. You don't knock unless you think maybe the door might be opened. You don't ask if you don't believe you might be answered. You don't dream, unless you believe that dreams can come true. You must have a vision.

The call to a co-operative approach to securing our individual and collective sense of security of course raises the question of how such an approach can be managed. Competition for privilege, power, and personal benefits has been the motivating force behind most of our modern human interaction. Competition facilitates decision making. The winner gets to impose their plans on the losers. Definitions and systems of relations are imposed on the losers, and in this way decisions are made and enforced. Something gets done. Some way must be found for people to decide whose approach to a problem will be taken, and how those who disagree will be compelled or motivated to comply with or at least accept the outcomes.

Under competition no consensus need be arrived at. One group is either granted the power by a majority vote, or takes the power by means of overwhelming force. The others are either powerless to stop it, or accept the outcome as unfortunate but legitimate. It will be at least nominally accepted. Those whose plans were not adopted may secretly conspire and scheme to undermine the success of the adopted plan, and to gain support for their own, but they will not do so openly. Not everyone is really working towards the same goals. Some are keen to sabotage it. Others are giving only a bit of themselves, and working half-heartedly. But the plans are going ahead and the decisions are being acted on. Those who defend such a process would point to this as legitimating such a process as effective.

They haven't been offered any real alternatives. They aren't ingenious enough to imagine alternatives for themselves. They therefore fail to recognize the opportunity costs of adopting such an approach to societal decision making. They fail to recognize all the costs of the competitive approach to problem solving, conflict resolution, and decision making. They fail to recognize TROONATNOOR. They fail to recognize the real opportunities that reality presents. They fail to recognize that more optimal behaviors would generate more optimal outcomes for everyone, and more positive life experiences for us all.

The alternative is more intellectually demanding. It requires us to give up on the notion of seeking security and satisfaction at the expense of others. It requires us to give up on notions of benefiting from unequal distributions of privilege and power. It requires holistic enlightenment. It requires fundamental shifts in our ways of defining and relating. It requires us to co-operate rather than compete. It requires us to accept decisions based on how compelling they are, based on how well they meet our individual and collective needs for security, rather than on how convenient and rewarding they are for us in particular.

Status and power will need to be distributed based on the capacity of actors to integrate enlightened holistic reasoning processes into their optimisation of processes and outcomes. It is their ability to become the agency of principle driven reason, rather than their ability to manipulate the public, that must determine their status and authority.

The most important question after genetic and socio-economic justice concerns motivation. The challenge is how to realize people's full potential, to motivate them to contribute it, in the absence of opportunities to accumulate excessive personal luxury and privilege. The U.S.S.R experienced extremely low productivity and motivation. Many would see that as the necessary and defining characteristic of non-capitalistic enterprise.

In fact the true social democracies of the world, the Nordic nations, have the highest standard of living in the world. They are defined by high motivation and productivity. We should not forget that the U.S.S.R was only 'officially' a just and fair society. The communist party defined this 'social reality' as real. In reality excess luxury and privilege were enjoyed by the communist party members, at the expense of the workers. Further, the U.S.S.R couldn't 'exploit' the third world in the same way the west has. See 'Convergences' for details.

People must be able to benefit directly from their labors. As soon as peasants in the U.S.S.R and China were allowed to keep a part of their private production, the peasants became much more productive. The point is that people should reap the rewards of their labor. If they work harder they should be rewarded more than those who do not work as hard. Rewards should be based on effort, rather than passive inheritance. There can be status and inequality, but it must be based on real merit, on real superiority, on real value production.

Merely inheriting capital cannot be defined as producing value. Inheriting human capital, talent, connections, a good family, and so on, represent no sacrifice or effort on the lucky beneficiaries' part. They are simply enjoying excessive rewards for being born lucky. There should be a real relationship between effort, sacrifice, and risk.

There is nothing motivating about being conceived to particular parents. You can't work harder to earn better parents. The existence of inherited wealth is in fact a de-motivator for the bulk of society. It is unfair. Injustice is de-motivating. It can in fact motivate people to produce less value, to sabotage production, and work well below their capacity. Why should they work hard when others get 'money for nothing and (their) chicks for free', as Mark Knoffler put it. Doing a 'half-assed' job has, Homer Simpson will tell you, become 'the American way' of responding to exploitative employers and an unfair economic system.

When the soviets abolished private ownership, many prosperous farmers preferred to burn their own crops and animals than have them 'appropriated' by the soviet authorities. The introduction of private property rights together with the right to privately market some produce, produced an overnight increase in effort and productivity. It is fair that you be rewarded for your hard work. It is unfair for someone to consume value when they make no effort to produce value.

Under capitalism people who produce no value at all reap most of the rewards. Excess luxury cannot be condoned in the presence of poverty. Excess privilege and power, especially that which is merely bought with money rather than earned with talent and competence, distorts the entire decision making process within a society. Those with power seek merely to line their own pockets at the expense of those who actually produce value in the society.

Social democracy with a market economy base has demonstrated itself to provide the greatest general standard of living and the highest level of social justice experienced by any human society to date.

I am of course aware that individual wealth can empower individuals to go against the majority, and innovate, independent of the usual constraints imposed by the majority. This is one of the real positive dimensions of individual wealth. However under the system I'm proposing innovation would not be stifled by an ignorant, defensive, unimaginative, 'tall-poppy-downing' majority. I believe that most excessive individual wealth and power is used for less than ideal purposes, to stifle true innovation, especially social innovation, rather than encourage it. The nature of the dominant hegemonic social reality, its definitions, and its systems of relations, must be the ultimate indicator of the overall impact of excessive individual wealth. We should be careful not to allow exceptions to the rule to be defined as defining properties of the rule. I recall the old adage that 'money is like manure; it is great if it is spread around, but it stinks if it is all piled up in one place'.

What is needed is that 'golden mean' of moderation. When we attempt to apply the Marxist adage of 'from each according to his means, to each according to his need', we find that 'each' unfortunately tends to need a lot, and 'each' tends to find that they have little 'means'. People are motivated by self-interest. This self-interest simply needs to be holistically enlightened.

Social democracy seems to offer the best 'balance'. It is the virtue between the vices of socialism and undisciplined capitalism. The individual must be the measure of all things, and be empowered to innovate and lead the society. However the individual must be educated to recognize that the context of all value production and innovation is the society as a whole.

The group must respect the individual, whilst that individual must respect the group. There must be a balance. We must avoid the vices of too extreme a focus on the society as a whole, as in socialism and fascism, and too extreme a focus on the individual, as expressed in unmitigated capitalism with its 'rugged individualism'. This is the balance that Social Democracy can offer, as long as it avoids becoming too populist, or too Socialist.

The family as an economic and political unit operating in the interests of capital

The family has long been identified by Marxist logic as an institution operating in the interests of capital. The wife provides free labor, supporting the husband who can then go to work for the owners of capital. The wife also reproduces the source of value, labor. The wife and family then socialize the unit of production into its role. This role will be that of its parent's socio-economic position translated or transposed into the future economy. Their children may occupy different actual jobs or locations than their parents, but they will occupy the equivalent socio-economic-status (SES) positions within their society.

The husband, with wife and children dependent on him, cannot risk losing his job. He is therefore unlikely to rock the boat. Not only the family is reproduced, but the whole system of relations of exploitation is reproduced. Appropriately socialized actors, ones who have internalized the dominant hegemonic definitions which naturalize the hegemonic definitions and systems of relations, are reproduced to fill particular positions in society. They reproduce the system of relations, definitions, and meanings which support the dominant hegemonic system of exclusive privilege and power.

The family unit produces the only source of value, labor, and re-produces the sets of reflexive definitions and systems of relations under which inherited inequality is reproduced, naturalized, and opportunistically exploited.

Parenting and reproductive responsibility

Most parents would be horrified by the thought of their children being raised by 'other' children's parents. Most people are rightly appalled by the low standard of parenting that occurs in most families. Most people are aware of the level of dysfunctionality in most homes. They wouldn't let most parents raise their own kids. We have much lower standards for other people's wellbeing and rights than we do for our own. This is human nature.

And so we sit by and watch others reproduce, and observe the sort of slow motion train wreck that is most children's childhood and life.

Of course relying on people to voluntarily restrict their freedom to reproduce is naive. Everyone's ego puts them in automatic denial. Most people assume that they are special cases, unique individuals. They simply assume they will be better parents than their own parents were, and that they will be able to offer their children all the things that their own parents couldn't offer them. They convince themselves that their children will have every opportunity to lead rewarding, positive, satisfying lives. Of course their own parents thought the same, and behaved the same.

Most people believe they will be able to avoid the mistakes their own parents made.

However most of them are living in denial, and go on to re-produce the same problems.

In terms of romantic relationships and marriage, everyone feels that their own love is eternal and undying. They imagine that their love is different to the love experienced by everyone else who went before them, married, and divorced, or endured destructive relationships. They deny that their own passion could fade, or that their own patience, tolerance, and acceptance, could ever be tested beyond its limits by a relationship.

This is the same ego that lets people justify their own privileges and exploitation of others, their crimes, their abuses, and their corruption. Their ego tells them that they are exceptions, they are special, they are more worthy, than others. They define themselves as more 'morally' deserving as their victims.

If reproduction was not 'natural', if it required deliberate concerted social action and technology to occur, and was a considered decision that the whole of a society was involved in, then would we be able to justify most of the reproduction that is currently occurring and will most likely continue to occur? If you personally had to bear the full responsibility and were held accountable for the consequences of the current 'laissez faire' approach to reproduction, then would you continue being so passive an observer of the current state of unregulated reproduction?

I believe that an informed adult does have this ethical responsibility, only they won't accept it, and its consequences. The slow motion train wreck that allegorically defines most children's lives is our fault. We let it happen. It does not have to happen. It is avoidable. It is preventable. We can prevent it. I believe we have the ethical responsibility to do so. I believe we should manage reproduction with the interests of every not-yet-conceived child as our benchmark, our 'referent'.

I remember reading about Michelangelo's 'Virgin with child' and a comment the author made that he was apparently trying to show Mary's 'predicament' of being the mother of a child who would ultimately go on to suffer a cruel death. I believe that this is in fact every mother's and father's predicament. Many children will go on to suffer much more than the biblical Jesus ever did. All of them will suffer to some degree. All will die.

For Eastern spiritualism this is a reminder to 'detach' from this world and seek freedom from re-birth. For optimalists, this is merely a reminder that all life must end at some point, and that there will be some suffering. The point for optimalists is to seek to engineer a life experience that justifies this suffering and ultimate death as costs of an otherwise positive, rewarding, satisfying, life. Every 'experience' has its costs and benefits. The optimalists seeks to optimize the cost-benefit basket.

A recognition that life is both good and bad, and that in many cases the costs of existing outweigh any benefits, underlies the optimalist's support for universal access to euthanasia, the right of all living creature's to a

dignified and painless 'exit' from this world, if and when they decide that the costs of their lives outweigh the benefits, and that their life is not worth living.

The problematic notion of reproduction as the meaning of life

Persons who cannot justify their existence in terms of their own positive experience and enjoyment of life may seek to justify their own suffering and endurance of a negative life by having children they assume will have a positive life experience. For the most part these children will find themselves in the same situation as their parents, and will reproduce with the same motivation. In this sense the constant misery and reproduction of misery is a result of the search for meaning, otherwise expressed as a justification for enduring suffering, which does not exist.

Those who claim their purpose or reason for living is to reproduce are being extremely teleological. The reality is that people tend to reproduce their situation or conditioning along with their genetic traits, and their socio-economic-cultural-genetic-inheritance is passed on over generations of suffering and unfulfilled desire. Most people suffer inheritance as a burden, rather than as a gift. I have defined the 'minimum' criteria that any reasonable person would wish to have met in their own inheritance in the form of a contract.

Unless parents are able to meet these criteria, they could not reasonably define their inheritance as a 'gift', and could hence not define reproducing themselves as a positive act that might somehow justify their own endurance of life. It is incredibly frustrating to consider that people will reproduce lives they themselves find little value in, and somehow manage to convince themselves that by producing even more people who will have to endure the same life, they can somehow justify their own endurance of it.

Of course parents always place the blame on their children for not being happy, as if their children would be miserable to 'spite' their parents. There are lines in 'The death of a salesman' that illuminate this sort of parental psychology. All parents will claim that they have given their children everything they need to be happy and successful. The parents are living in denial, trying to deny responsibility for their children's experience of life. The parents forced their children to exist, and forced their own socio-economic-genetic-historical inheritance upon their children. I am incredulous at how parents can 'manage' to revise reality, and allow themselves to believe that their children would somehow lead different lives to their own.

Of course the children go on to do exactly the same thing that their parents did, and blame their own children for not being happier than they themselves were and are. You could call it 'retrospective' karma, being punished for bad karma you are going to earn later in life.

The morality or otherwise of reproduction

Whether the act of having or not having children is selfish or selfless, is, in the first instance, dependent on the intentions of the parents, and whose interests we consider, or take as a reference.

It may well be that those 'reproductively incontinent' persons with children feel guilty about having brought children into this world. They may wish others to help them socially legitimate their decision as a good one by having children themselves. I mean, if everyone is doing it, it can't be wrong, can it?

They may feel jealous of those without what they may experience as a burden.

Parents may also make claims about the morality of having children in order to justify a claim on more of society's resources, to socially justify an increased redistribution of resources from those without children to those with children.

There is nothing intrinsically compelling about the argument that a 'moral' duty exists to reproduce. There are, however, compelling grounds to question the 'morality' of having children.

It is the interests of the not-yet-conceived that a 'moral' approach would consider. In fact it is exclusively in the consideration of the interests of not-yet-conceived things that we can ever actually approximate 'moral' intention. The not-yet-conceived have no vested interests, yet. If we act in consideration of not-yet-existing persons, using them as the only referent in our calculations, then we approximate a truly 'moral' motivation. Any other sort of behavior is motivated by direct and indirect self-interest.

We are motivated, in every instance, by self-interest. We consider our interests directly, and then how our interests are best served by promoting the interests of 'ours', our family, our children, our tribe, our ethnic group, our 'nation', our socio-political constellations, our 'species', our 'biosphere', our ecosystems, our planet, our universe, and so on. The referent is always ultimately ourselves.

The motivator is always the question 'how does this decision impact, ultimately, on me?'. Only when we are considering the interests of the not-yet-conceived as the sole referents of a decision, can we be considered to be motivated by anything approximating 'morality'. For the not-yet-conceived can neither help nor harm us. They cannot promote our interests, as they don't exist.

Of course if we simply project our interests onto their 'potential' existence, we would merely be operating on the self-interest motive once more. We would still, ultimately, be considering how our decision regarding the not-yet-conceived will impact on us.

We can only approximate true 'moral' intention when the sole referent of our decisions regarding reproduction are those not-yet-conceived's who will be re-produced as a result of our decision.

Parents may gain satisfaction from having children, but this is a narrow vested interest which must be discounted against the interests of the not-yet-conceived.

Some parents actually claim that having children is selfless. This could only be the case in an instance where parents deliberately had children against their own wishes in order to serve other interests, as an act of self-sacrifice. Immanuel Kant apparently agrees with me. In all other cases parents have children to satisfy their own selfish interests, because they want to. Of course many 'manage' not to take contraceptive measures, and define their reproduction as accidental or un-planned, even un-desired. Under this definition, they can satisfy their urges, while claiming absolution from 'moral' responsibility for the new lives they have brought into their world, responsibility for having reproduced themselves and their own holistic inheritance.

It may be selfish for a couple with the perfect credentials for parenthood not to reproduce at a time when the community as a whole could guarantee the offspring would have great lives. However such criteria have never been met, so at this point in history most reproduction has been, and is, in the interests of the parents. I should add here, in the interests of the beneficiary classes.

The few exceptions include those cases of rape, or of people being forced to reproduce due to cultural prescriptions, and due to being denied access to any effective form of contraception. As the Vatican has denied the

poor people of Manila and Africa access to contraception, the Vatican is 'morally' culpable for providing for the resulting children. It must be made legally accountable.

If you are going to be responsible for reproduction, then you should be held accountable, and made responsible for the consequences of your behavior. Send in the liquidators to sell off the Catholic Church's assets, to alleviate some of the misery it is responsible for. I challenge any court in the world to issue the warrants, and to place a 'liens' on the income of the Catholic Church. Every other 'father' of children is required to pay 'maintenance' for children they had a part in producing. The 'holy father' is no exception.

Due to his acts children have been produced. It is now time for him to 'pay up', to be a responsible father. I hereby serve a universal 'alimony' suit against the Catholic Church on behalf of all his 'children'. The Pope is the ultimate 'delinquent father' or 'deadbeat dad'.

No parents can validly claim that their children owe them anything, or that they, the parents, are behaving selflessly. No parents can claim that other couples are being selfish by not having children.

Not having children is conventionally defined as selfish, while having children is defined as selfless, in the popular language culture. Children are defined as owing their parents something for having had them. This attests to the power of hegemony, and of the institutions of the family and the church. The social reality in this case is, as it often is, totally at odds with the primary reality. Having children is selfish in reality. Social reality manages to define not having children as selfish. I even felt an obligation myself, as I was growing up, to have children. Of course it was the typical 'feeling' that the dominant, hegemonic 'culture' had instilled in me. It makes no sense in hindsight. But it is a fact that I did, at various stages in my life, feel that I had an obligation that I was not meeting. I actually felt guilty.

The dominant hegemonic culture promotes the vested interests of those couples who wish not only to have children, but to be defined as heroes, and to gain access to greater material benefits and social resources, merely for satisfying their ultimately selfish desires.

Anyone who claims that they have a 'moral' motivation in reproducing is living in denial. If they truly want to love and care for someone, then there are millions of children longing to be loved and cared for that are alive right now. People don't love children 'per se', they love 'their' children, for the benefits they anticipate receiving from 'their' children.

There is no 'moral' imperative to reproduce. The only 'morality' or 'holistic enlightenment' at play is in the decisions of responsible people to deny themselves the satisfaction of their selfish impulses, in the interests of the 'not-yet-conceived'.

You want to play with fire? Good, but don't ask me to put out your fires, or pay for the damage

If you want to let people reproduce like stray cats and dogs, with nothing to offer their offspring, then fine. But do not try to make me feel responsible for the consequences. If you enjoy the drama of suffering and misery, good for you, but do not force me to give tacit consent. Do not expect me to suffer via empathy. If you want to reproduce suffering and misery then enjoy your misery and suffering out of sight and out of mind. Well I guess this is what the 'suburbs' are for, right? Only I had the misfortune to grow up in them.

I am aware that many people indulge in pathos and find it emotionally satisfying. They especially like to be able to feel more fortunate than someone, and to have someone whose relative inequality they can exploit. If you are the victim, then stop the cycle now. Do not reproduce, and then expect the world to care what happens to you and your 'family'. The world does not care. If it did, it would not have allowed you to have been produced in the first place.

I am sick of watching the slow-motion car accident that is most people's lives. The outcomes are easy to predict, and horrific. If you want to lap up the suffering, and bask in the drama of misery, then do so in private. My only response-ability is defined and realized in my Protocols. If you will not allow them to be put into practice, then you have denied me any productive response-ability. Therefore I am absolved of all responsibility.

I am not going to suffer empathy pointlessly. If you happen to be a victim, stop acting as if you are the center of the universe which is going to open its loving arms to embrace you and save you from the tragedy of your own drama. Take the response-ability you have. Stop re-producing misery. Social innovation is much less easily accepted than technical innovation

When we go about the world we become observers of the chaos and incompetence of our social organization. On the streets you have to be careful not to get run over on a pedestrian crossing by a truck running a red light. You will be forced to inhale the toxic smoke of your fellow human cigarette addict. You will observe the misery and hopelessness of the homeless. You will discover, should you enter into a discussion with the average person, a total lack of intellectual rigor.

Should you enter into the average family or relationship, you will be appalled by the average person's lack of basic competence. However these very same people work in factories that operate efficiently and produce amazing high tech products defined by incredible reliability and innovation.

What is the difference then? Why are the same incompetent humans able to produce such stunning achievements? The answer is that in the factory they submit to the protocols imposed on them by engineers and management. A few innovative humans generate protocols, which a minority of persons can teach a relatively high number of operators to carry out. In the factory the operators accept the protocols imposed on them in return for the benefits they receive in return; money, and products to buy with that money.

Humanity has made greater technical progress than social progress because it is easier to get humans to submit to technically innovative protocols than to socially innovative protocols. It is easy to market the benefits of safer, faster, better handling, more fuel efficient cars, faster, higher performance computers, and better quality, cheaper, stereos and televisions. These innovations do not threaten the human ego.

They appear to offer something better with no risk of losing anything. They appear to carry no opportunity cost. Of course social innovations, the imposition of protocols, the restriction of personal choice, and the loss of apparent freedoms, are much more threatening. In the case of social engineering, such as introducing new laws, the costs are obvious, the loss of some 'freedom' or other, some 'self-determination', some 'right'. However the benefits are not clear.

It is much harder to market the benefits of social innovations than technological ones. Given the threat posed by the imposition of external protocols, laws, restrictions, controls, and management, and the inability often

to comprehend their benefits, which may be long term and far off, it is no wonder that technical progress, the implementation of technical innovations, has far outpaced social progress, the implementation of social innovations.

Few people fight for the right to buy a 1980s model car or computer. Few people would challenge your desire for better technology and innovations. However should you express a desire for a technology that might guarantee that your children would be conceived beautiful, intelligent, and healthy, you will be challenged as being superficial, shallow, and somehow less 'moral'.

The chances of your children experiencing the positive of being conceived beautiful is enhanced by you mating with a beautiful partner. Real beauty is generally an indicator of health, wellbeing, and adaptation. Anti-Eugenicists will claim that beauty is a mere social construct, a fad or fashion. They will claim that we have no right to impose our own tastes upon future generations. This is disingenuous, specious, claptrap. As Watson, the father of DNA himself recognized, this is a mere ploy on the part of anti-eugenicists to avoid being defined as inferior. They selfishly wish to live in denial, and force their offspring to suffer the consequences.

Beauty, or aesthetic superiority, is real. We are not talking about some racially exclusive notion of beauty, but objective beauty. Beauty is objective. If you are arguing with this right now then you are, either consciously or not-consciously, threatened by the fear that you are not beautiful. Either that or you know you are beautiful, and you wish to maintain the exclusive benefits and privileges you experience as a result of being exclusively beautiful. If everyone were beautiful, then you'd lose those privileges and benefits.

Maybe you are an attractive person and your children will probably be attractive, but What if you were bound to come back as someone else's child next time round? Would you want those parents to consider your interests? Would you want an ugly, unintelligent, untalented, unhealthy, poor couple as your parents, reproducing their qualities and condition in the form of you? I'm not saying, dogmatically, that this will happen. The point is for you to consider the interests of people who are not you or your children. An optimal dogma would contain this as an article of faith. I will call it the random reincarnation into available experience engines tenet. If you believed in this dogma, then you would probably take a different stance on eugenics.

If it becomes clear that most humans have not evolved to the point of being able to live without religious dogma, then at least we should offer them the optimal one, one that would produce a society defined by greater justice, meritocracy, positive life experience, real value production, and positive motivation, without losing the 'individual' as the ultimate measure or referent of all decision making.

The desire to mate with a beautiful partner is positive, as it increases the chances of offspring being healthy and well-adapted. Desire is one of the few elements of positive selection within an evolutionary process generally driven by negative selection. Of course if you are unattractive and rejected as a mate, then you will still experience this process as negative selection.

More importantly to this discussion, the human ego rejects being defined negatively. It resists having properties it does not itself have from being valued as superior. If it is unattractive, unintelligent, and incompetent, it will resist the concept of value judgments in general, to prevent itself from being judged and valued as inferior.

In this way, the popular culture worships beauty on one level, but resists beauty being defined as a property which could define the beautiful as superior to the majority. This is why, in the popular language culture, an affectation for beauty is often defined as superficial and shallow. This contributes to the popular sentiment against deliberately attempting to increase the distribution of the property beauty amongst the human population, otherwise known as eugenics.

This resistance to eugenics is also reflexive of notions of a physical-spiritual dualism, itself reflexive of religious definitions which define the body as an insignificant obstacle to be de-valued, controlled, and overcome, in the pursuit of spiritual enlightenment.

This sort of thinking has been taken to extremes in human history. In Ireland, as the Catholic Church was gaining dominance at the expense of the 'Pagan' beliefs and practices, very attractive girls were considered too attractive for their own good. They were imprisoned in convents, for their own good, to protect their beauty from

seducing men, and damning their eternal souls. This is historical fact. In many cases these girls were exploited by the religious orders, who ran brothels in their convents. The girls were forced into sexual slavery by purveyors of religious dogmas which defined sexuality as a sin.

The Catholic Church in Ireland demonized sexuality. It waged a war with the Irish pagan traditions in which the female was sexually liberated and empowered. It denied a generation of females' access to males, by insisting that men become celibate priests. Rabbis, the Jewish version of priest, usually marry. For the first 1000 years Christian priests were also allowed to marry. So why did the Catholic Church suddenly find celibacy necessary for priests?

Irish Catholicism defined sexuality as the ultimate sin. We still suffer from this legacy of catholic guilt. Some Muslim women today suffer terribly as a legacy of this sort of religious dogma, in the form of genital mutilation. A single Catholic order in Ireland has set aside 161 million Euros to compensate the victims of child abuse in its own order. This gives us an idea of the scope of the problem, if so many children could have suffered at the hands of the priests of just a single order. How could a word meaning 'to love children', pedophile, come to describe something so loathsome? Surely we should find a more appropriate term.

We are trained to underplay our instinctive judgments of beauty and to focus on personality or character when selecting mates. The guilt we experience when we do privately judge people based on their aesthetic qualities is reflexive of our socialization into the hegemonic popular culture. Beauty in fact makes a great contribution to our personal sense of well-being, and enhances our life experience. It can enhance other people's life experience too. However when it is exclusive, we might quote Stephen Morrissey and say 'pretty girls make graves'. The longing for an attractive lover, can be agonizing and lead to self-destructive behaviors.

Almost everyone's ego demands to reproduce itself, and probably everyone's hormones provide a desire for sex, and maybe even self-replication. However an honest evaluation of the value of beauty in the holistic 'inheritance' package, would automatically exclude the bulk of the human population from reproduction, and therefore the satisfaction of these egotistical and biological urges. This is why the masses must reflexively resist aesthetic based judgments of superiority.

Those enjoying power and privilege are happy to oblige. The ego and biological drives of the masses are complimentary to the interests of the powerful and privileged, for whom a growing population represents a growing potential for value production, as producers of value and as markets for production.

Social actors who are unhappy with their lives in general are more easily directed to produce value for the privileged, by working longer, and consuming more, in an attempt to distract themselves from their intrinsically unrewarding lives, to compensate for their lack of positive life experiences. Whole industries have arisen in response to our lack of natural attractiveness, and our lack of opportunities for innocent sensual and sexual experiences. A great deal of our junk production and consumption is a form of ersatz or replacement satisfaction. People who are happy, sexually satisfied, emotionally secure, socially accepted, valued and approved of, and who have peace of mind and an intrinsic sense of their 'self-worth', are not motivated to produce or consume valueless, narcissistic, ersatz, junk.

Many people hope to become attractive to others, and gain their acceptance and approval, and greater self-esteem, through social, business, and financial success. This generates wealth for the owners of the various forms of capital. It increases sales of status goods designed to appeal to the narcissist's need for social acceptance and social approval. Most people have to work long and hard, and get into debt, in order to afford such status goods, merely to appear successful. This is all in the interests of the dominant hegemonic beneficiaries.

The fallacious argument for maintaining population growth

The 'problem' of an aging population is one of baby 'booms' followed by lower population growth.

If population growth, the fertility rate, is relatively constant, then a population 'replacement' will take place, maintaining a stable distribution of young and old, of workers and retired persons. It is not the current falling birthrate that is the source of this problem. Rather it is the excesses of previous generations that is responsible. These excesses produced the problem. The real problem is how to deal with the consequences of the earlier 'baby boom'. Government policies to increase reproduction, to have one for the mother, one for the father, and one for the nation; we have the Prime Minister on record for the day when these 'third' children sue the Australian Federal Government for child maintenance: miss the point.

Continuing population growth is not tenable. It is not sustainable. The notion of having children to support the 'baby boomers' in old age is unsustainable. The current generation would need to produce several children each to support the 'baby boomers'. These children's children would then need to produce several children each to support them in turn. Can you see where this is heading?

Each generation would need to produce at least as many children as the previous generation, in order to support it in old age. In other words the world's population would have to continue increasing each generation. At what point will people be forced by overpopulation to sacrifice its retired people's standard of living, or pay more taxes to support them? At some point it would become inevitable.

So it is clear that sooner or later one generation will have to pay more than the previous, to support that generation. Alternatively that generation will have to accept a lower standard of living than the previous generation of pensioners. Of course the wealthy will be better off than their parents. We are only talking about the working poor who will be dependent on government pensions.

The most just and simple response to the problems of an aging population is to tax the wealth of the wealthy retirees and re-distribute it to those people who actually produced that wealth, those retirees on social security. It is ridiculous that the wealthiest members of our society, the retirees, pay less tax than those people who produce the value they consume, the current 'working poor'.

Of course politicians only care about what happens on their 'watch'. They tend towards short-term, politically attractive, behaviors, rather than long term, responsible ones. They are only held accountable in the short term. Someone else will inherit the consequences, and have to deal with them. The growing population of retirees don't want to be the generation that pays. They'd rather send the bill to their children.

A responsible government would deal with the problems of a temporarily aging population today. I say temporary, as the aged population will die, then the 'baby boomers' of the 60's will die, and the population pyramid will become balanced once more at a new and sustainable replacement rate of reproduction. If the population falls, real estate will become less scarce, and allow each person access to more living room. Even assuming the same level of raw resources, the per capita 'raw materials' wealth of each person would increase. Thus we could anticipate a better quality of life and standard of living.

The aging population dilemma is really a convenient facade behind which the owners of capital can promote an increase in the population of value producing and consuming labor. Only labor produce value. Only labor consume production, and hence produce profits for capital. Without demand for goods and services there is no demand for financial capital, and hence it becomes less valuable. Only an increase in population will ensure an ever increasing demand for limited resources, including real estate, and ensure a continual 'windfall' of rising prices for the owners of capital.

I say windfall, as the owners do not need to invest anything, in real terms, in order to benefit from rising real estate prices. Most returns to the owners of capital are in fact opportunistic windfalls. The owners make no real sacrifices or effort. They merely re-invest their capital, and force those who don't have capital to pay more and more

for the right to borrow it. Labor borrows capital merely in order to be allowed to produce more value for those they borrow from.

China's 'one-child policy'

It is not uncommon to hear western media refer to the horrific one child policy in China as if it were a human rights violation. China is the only exception I can think of to the general rule where the state powers seek to increase fertility, that is, birthrates. They may be the example of the situation I predicted, whereby an increasing population came to be seen as a liability to the dominant hegemonic interests. In this case that group is the so called Communist Party (sic).

Having noted a continuation of the historical preference of Chinese couples for male heirs, the state has now began promoting the value of girls. They needed to, to prevent a worrying trend that would deny a large proportion of Chinese boys any chance of finding a Chinese girl. Parents valued boys more than girls, due to the cultural practices and definitions they had inherited. Many parents paid for illegal tests to determine the sex of their unborn child. If it was a girl, many parents had the unborn child aborted. Of course this resulted in more boys than girls being conceived.

MY PROTOCOLS

The rights of children and the not-yet-conceived

Improving 'universal' access to childcare, kindergartens, and compulsory and higher education, television, the internet, books, and radio, confront children with perspectives and assumptions wider and more inclusive than their parents' own narrow, exclusive, dogmatic ones.

Social welfare makes the state an alternative provider for families, allowing greater independence for wives and children who were previously dependent on the male breadwinner. Family demographics are changing. Opportunities for travel, education, and exposure to competing definitions and world views are accessible to more people than ever before.

However parents and family are still sources of narrow convention and dogma, and often of neuroses. Not all parents are competent humans, let alone competent parents. This means many do not have the emotional and material resources to ensure that the children in their care grow up in a loving, supportive, secure, and nurturing environment. The family as an institutions for the caring and nurturing of children functions brilliantly in some cases, but it is at best mediocre in the majority of cases. Therefore the cost of allowing these exceptional few to continue to experience their inherited (you don't get to choose your parents) privileges, is the denial of alternatives more able to provide opportunities and material and emotional resources for the majority of children.

The opportunity costs of conventional parenting are the conditions and benefits we could offer every child under alternative models. Of course the privileged lucky few will experience the reduction in their privileges as a cost. However in the long run, everyone will benefit in ways that most are not yet able to imagine, or appropriately value.

It is for this reason that most social innovations must be imposed on often reluctant beneficiaries. The few beneficiaries of the current status quo use their hegemonic power to keep their 'perceived' benefits. They prevent any serious consideration of alternative models by controlling the hegemonic discourses. The dominant hegemonic social reality which is inherited by everyone makes any 'obtrusive' controls largely unnecessary. People accept the current reflexive sets of definitions and systems of relations, including the institutionalization of the 'family', as natural, normal, and take them for granted. Few would ever think to consider whether alternatives even existed, let alone whether they were being denied superior alternatives.

Changes in the reflexive sets of definitions and systems of relations usually only occur as they are consistent with the wider values, definitions, and interests of the dominant hegemonic groups. Sometimes competition amongst the dominant hegemonic groups produces a slight shift in definitions and systems of relations to accommodate and reflect small shifts in the balances of hegemonic power, and reflexive shifts in the interests of the dominant hegemonic groups.

New technologies sometimes produce new forms of 'hegemony', and change the 'membership' profiles of the dominant hegemonic order. Industrialization and the rise of merchant 'classes' gave financial capital and human capital greater emphasis over aristocratic titles, producing some changes in membership of the dominant hegemonic groups, whilst producing no major qualitative changes in the nature of hegemonic power per se, or of the generic motivations and interests of the dominant hegemonic elites.

Changes in the profiles of the beneficiary group's demographics resulted in some minor changes in the dominant hegemonic groups reflexive sets of definitions and systems of relations, which lead to some administrative changes and changes in legal codes.

These changes occurred while democratic forms of government were emerging. However new instruments of hegemonic power were emerging at the same time, in the form of mass media, with which the nominally 'democratic' powers could 'manage' public opinion, and transform the old 'obtrusive' forms of power into more 'unobtrusive' forms. Rather than issue 'decrees', the new dominant hegemonic masters could manipulate public opinion, using old techniques applied with new technologies, including print media, radio, television, and the cinema. They could manipulate the public into 'choosing' their decrees, as if they merely reflected their own

opinions and values. The people would have the subjective feeling that their 'opinions' were valued, and being 'acted on'. They would feel that they were making the decisions and their 'masters' were merely 'representing' their interests.

In this way the ultimate hegemonic power became entrenched and naturalized. There was no longer any need for most of the old trappings of power. The power of the dominant hegemonic elites was reflected within all the institutions of the society, and therefore 'institutionalized'. It was 'internalized' by most of the participants in the 'democratic process', as 'public opinion' and 'moral sentiment'. Hence we have the 'institution' of the nuclear family, the institution of marriage, and romantic love.

Any 'changes' that are inconsistent with the 'natural' order, the dominant hegemonic set of reflexive definitions and systems of relations, will be very difficult to introduce. They would represent a shift in the holistic dominant hegemonic social reality, and a shift in the balance of interests and balance of power within the dominant hegemonic groups. Fundamental changes in the 'inherited' systems of relations will face great opposition. In fact they rarely occur.

All change has been incremental. The new must be compatible at some level with the old. Often complete 'modules' of new must be available to replace entire 'modules' of the old, to allow for any changes. This is what 'paradigm shift' refers to. This requires some upheavals. However the modules must be complimentary, consistent, and compatible with the greater whole. Only then can they be integrated to become a part of this whole. Otherwise we get dis-integration, which is experienced as death by organisms, civil war by nations, and a breakdown in the various systems of production, distribution, and law and order within and between communities.

Any new 'parts' must either be consistent with existing definitions and systems of relations, or provide complete replacement 'modules' to ensure they can be integrated into the old whole. Piecemeal modifications won't achieve much. You'll either get 'same old shit, new language', and at best token, temporary behavioral changes without fundamental shifts in values or attitudes. To get sustained and authentic reform or transformation, you need to provide complete 'modules' which are complete sub-sets of reflexive definitions and systems of relations, which are compatible with, and therefore can be integrated into, the dominant hegemonic system, the 'greater whole' we call society. It must be consistent with The Realities Of Our Nature, And The Nature Of Our Realities. It must produce the value, or perform the functions, of the existent 'modules' which you want to eliminate.

Remember that nature abhors a void. You must have a new module ready to replace the one you want to remove. You need a complete 'whole' module. Every individual change you want to instigate will have reflexive repercussions for every other part of the whole.

Everything is 'linked', connected, related. You will have to trace all the connections and relationships between the changes you seek, and the current reflexive sets of definitions and systems of relations. You will have to integrate a new set of definitions and systems of relations within the existing ones.

It is true that some things exist despite serving no interests or functions. However we must be very careful when seeking to comprehend the functions and interests that any existing definition or relation may be serving. We have taken so many things for granted for so long that we are unlikely to recognize all the interests that are being served by the definitions or systems of relations we are observing. Remember that all definitions and systems of relations are reflexive of each other, and embedded in wider definitions and systems of relations that are not obvious, transparent, or apparent.

We have to be careful in identifying these relationships, between apparently unrelated definitions, practices, values, beliefs, assumptions, institutions, legal codes, norms, and so on. Past efforts at social transformation failed to do this, and therefore failed in providing sustainable, superior alternatives to their contemporary dominant hegemonic reflexive sets of definitions and systems of relations.

History has shown that revolutions tend to fail. What is needed is an evolution of the holistic reflexive sets of definitions and systems of relations we have inherited. We can decide which parts of the whole are optimal, and

should therefore be reproduced. We can determine what changes are consistent with TROONATNOOR as a whole. We can seek real progress and reform within our reflexive sets of definitions and relationships.

We must also remember that the laws and regulations which were not convenient or immediately profitable for the dominant hegemonic interests were initially opposed by the majority. The majority usually 'support' the dominant hegemonic interests, as they are exposed to all the manipulations of the media which 'constructs' their, *the Public's*, opinion. The majority is usually wrong. Therefore the few 'innovative' politicians and public officials who have opposed the inherited hegemony have had to employ all their resourcefulness in countering the hegemonic interest's construction of public opinion, in getting legislation passed which imposed regulations upon industry, financial market operators, and consumers alike. Today the Obama administration is facing the same resistance in his attempts to reform the U.S finance industry, to improve levels of transparency, accountability, responsibility, and prudence.

The public can sometimes be very stubborn, like a small child experiencing discipline for the first time. Tantrums are to be expected. Once people experience the new benefits of a new 'module' that is forced upon them they tend to reluctantly accept it, and often even revise their own history to pretend that they were in favor of the changes all along. People act based on their emotional desires. They then rationalize that behavior, ascribing explanations, justifications, excuses, and reasons for it. They pretend their actions are rational, rather than emotional. This is how people ascribe themselves free will. Once you get a person to change their behavior, they tend to rationalize it, revising their own motives in hindsight to comply with their desire to imagine they are rational, and their wills are free. See 'Convergences' for details.

Many 'successful' changes will be abandoned shortly after they are implemented, as the original opposition remobilizes to reassert its hegemonic domination. The work of reform and transformation does not end with the passing of legislation. Legislation must be 'popularized'. It must gain the support of the majority, even if it gives this grudgingly, as in the case of laws to protect pedestrians, cyclists, motorists or non-smokers. We must remember that no definitions or their reflexive systems of relations are truly secure until they are internalized, and naturalized.

This means we have to seek to change other values, assumptions, practices, and systems of relations which are in any way connected to the new ones. You have to gain 'hegemonic' status for your new definitions or systems of relations. They have to become seamlessly integrated into the whole. They must become accepted as natural and normal, and part of 'the best of all possible worlds'. They have to take on a subjective and social reality for enough people that they become a dimension of the dominant hegemonic social reality.

For example, it must be an automatic action on the part of car drivers to put on their seat-belts before driving off. Smokers must automatically consider if their smoking might impact on anyone else before lighting up, and find it natural and normal that they should not smoke around others. Non-smokers must find it equally natural to expect to have their rights to a smoke-free environment respected. These things cease being considered something that needs to be 'negotiated'. They must become reflex actions. Only then have laws prescribing the use of seat-belts, and laws protecting non-smokers from enforced tobacco consumption, become effective, normalized, naturalized, and a taken for granted part of the social fabric. The same could be said about 'safer-sex' and condoms. Only when behaviors become taken for granted and natural have they achieved their objectives. They must become the new benchmarks. It will be deviations from these new norms which will now need to be negotiated. Thus it will be the old deviations that will have become the norm, and the earlier norms that will have become deviate. The rhetoric question will cease to be 'you don't mind if I smoke do you'? It will become, 'you are not planning to smoke here are you?'

Only when people are automatically 'shocked' when someone drives around with no seatbelt, or has sex without a condom, or 'lights-up' in a public place, can we say that the new laws have been effective. Only when such responses become reflex, have they had the impact desired. Only then have they been internalized and normalized. Only when the behaviors that definitions inform become 'second nature' can we say we have achieved our ultimate aims. Until then it will be necessary to enforce such behaviors with disincentives such as fines and so on.

Of course we should always encourage renewed interrogation of any new laws and naturalized behaviors, especially in light of any new innovations or revelations. We need to be reminded of why we are behaving in certain ways, to reinforce our motivations. We need to make sure we haven't assumed that history is 'completed'. There will always be room for improvement. We should never assume anything. History and progress are open-ended questions. Nothing should be 'set in stone'. Nothing should be considered 'beyond question'. We should always keep in mind the reasons we have particular rules. We shouldn't take anything for granted. We shouldn't assume that we are any more perfect than those who came before us, and whose rules, definitions, and their reflexive systems of relations we ourselves have challenged, and 'improved upon'.

The majority will claim that controls of their behavior are impossible, and won't work. They won't be accepted. Controls won't work. Smokers have argued this for decades. But the bans and controls worked, and businesses didn't go bankrupt. In fact today, after the new laws and regulations, more people go out to bars and restaurants than before. Today potential patrons no longer refrain from patronizing clubs because they are likely to be forced to inhale toxins and poisons, and go home stinking like burnt tobacco products. Smokers have been 'managed' and controlled just like one would a recalcitrant child.

They have accepted these controls, as deep down they always knew that their behavior was anti-social, inappropriate, unfair, and damaging to the health and wellbeing of their colleagues, family, peers, friends, and anyone else who had no choice but to consume their second-hand smoke. The tobacco lobby was so powerful that it prevented them from having to admitting all this. They could go on denying the damage they were inflicting on others and themselves. They could deny that they were drug addicts. One day tobacco will be seen in the same light as heroin and cocaine, and the fatuous arguments of the tobacco lobby will be seen as the tantrums of a spoiled child not wanting to do what it should. The tobacco lobby and industry will go down in history as one of the most truly evil empires ever.

The Protocols including 'The Contract' between parents, state, and the not-yet-conceived

The following are key points to be formalized as a legally binding contract defining the rights of the not-yet-conceived, and the obligations that any parent must agree to, and demonstrate the capacity to meet, before a parenting license can be issued.

This contract recognizes that the not-yet-conceived have no rights other than those we give it in this contract.

People spend a lot of time complaining about how unattractive, unintelligent, and untalented they are. They complain about how hard and unrewarding their lives are. They complain how pathetic their sex lives or jobs are. And so on and so on. They then go on to force virtually the exact same inheritance upon the innocent not-yet-conceived.

Each generation deludes itself that it can and will be better parents. Each generation imagines that the next generation, their own children, will somehow 'escape' the life they themselves currently live. They somehow imagine they will be able to give their children 'every opportunity'.

They then go on to claim that their own children 'fail' simply 'to spite them'. It is all so stupid and ugly and totally avoidable. It is like a car accident you see about to happen. It is totally avoidable, but no-one will take the steps necessary to avoid it. Both drivers are hell-bent of getting their way, of having 'their will be done', despite the expectation that, as adults, they should be fully aware of the laws of physics. They crash, blame each other, and lament how 'dangerous' the roads are.

This contract is as logical as the enforcement of speed limits, seat-belt use, proscriptions against driving under the influence of drugs, compulsory driver training, driver licensing, and road worthiness checks. Its aim is to avoid the reasonably foreseeable outcomes of unregulated reproduction, in the same way that these other regulations are intended to prevent other accidents that could reasonably be anticipated in their absence.

Like all regulation it represents a restriction of some freedom to, in order to produce a greater, more valuable freedom from. Most reproduction is a road accident in progress. It will claim its victims. It is, however, hardly an

unforeseeable accident. It is for the most part foreseeable, and therefore avoidable. The restriction of the freedom to haphazardly and irresponsibly reproduce yourself is justifiable in terms of the greater value of the freedom from inheriting lives that are a burden rather than a gift. Like all other laws, the aim of responsible reproductive regulation would be to get people to act 'as if' they were rational.

Would you relive your life exactly as you experienced it? Unless you can answer yes without any reservations, denial, hesitations, or qualifications, you cannot, in good conscience, automatically reproduce yourself. It is a, mostly sad, fact, that we reproduce our genetic, socio-economic, socio-historical, class, status, and general life experience when we reproduce ourselves. There are of course exceptions, but they are just that, exceptions which define the rule.

We often reproduce ourselves to satisfy our egos, and to use our children to achieve agendas and aspirations we feel we could have achieved, had our circumstances been more favorable. We fool ourselves into believing that we will be able to provide these more favorable circumstances for our children. When we use our offspring to pursue goals and agendas we had for ourselves, to live vicariously through them, we are using them as means to our ends. That is a good definition of slavery.

The same is true when we reproduce to have someone who is dependent on us, someone to love, and be loved by, someone to provide us with a sense of purpose, a reason to endure our lives, and a sense of security.

Your children will do little better, and often worse, than you have done. They will be as mean, selfish, egotistical, self-centered, obstinate, stubborn, and so on, as you are.

Would you relive your life exactly as you have experienced it? That is implicitly what you are demanding that your not-yet-conceived child do when you reproduce yourself.

Do you wish you were healthier, smarter, more attractive, happier, richer, and had more opportunities for positive development and experience? Do you envy others their attractiveness, talent, intelligence, health, or opportunities?

This contract is intended to ensure that your not-yet-conceived children start life with the best of all chances, and grow up under the optimal conditions, with the greatest opportunities we can provide for a positive life experience.

Every child has the right to be conceived lucky. Being a parent is not about reproducing yourself. Being a responsible parent is about nurturing the new life that you have the privilege of sharing.

We must decouple parenting from reproduction, in the interests of the not-yet-conceived. Ideally we would do this in the interests of the not-yet-conceived. It may well be, however, that we share these interests. We may, ourselves, one day be newly-conceived as one of these not-yet-conceived children. Would you want to inherit the same life you have lived? Or would you want to inherit a life defined by greater beauty, health, talent, happiness, intelligence, and opportunity?

The privileged people of this world want to maintain their privileges at the expense of the majority, and at the expense of your not-yet-conceived children. Will you be their accomplice? You can't blame them. They are not behaving, in principle, any differently than you do. They are merely doing what suits them. They are seeking to opportunistically exploit and reproduce the inequality that they are the beneficiaries of.

Under this contract reproduction will only occur as a deliberate and planned act which is entered into responsibly. The actors and State will be held accountable. All resourcing of the contract will be pre-funded. No state will ever be able to claim that they do not have the money to adequately fund health or educational services. They will only be allowed to produce children when they have ensured these resources and opportunities in advance.

Sperm and ovum will be taken from men and women at the optimum time, as determined by specialists, in their sexual maturity. All men and women will then be effectively sterilized by the simplest means available. When all the other conditions are met, and suitable parents have been 'qualified' and 'vetted', the mothers will have fertilized eggs implanted in them. These mothers may or may not be the final parent.

The most important principle is the de-coupling of parenting from reproduction. People will become the parents of a child which may or may not be their biological child. This may or may not involve them reproducing

themselves. Which genetic traits are reproduced, that is, which ovum are fertilized with which sperm, will be determined in the interests of the not-yet-conceived. Children will not be produced as ego satisfactions for men and women. Re-production will effectively become production.

Any and all decisions regarding new a life will be made with that new life as the referent for cost-benefit analyses. Slaves will not be reproduced. Parents will not be reproduced. Children with the optimum genetic and social potential, and opportunities, will be produced. Their holistic inheritance will be a gift rather than a burden, an asset rather than a liability.

Those who have the privileges of nurturing them, and sharing their lives with them, will have entered into that contract fully informed, aware, and conscious of their responsibilities. They and the State will be held accountable for meeting their obligations under the contract. The contract will be legally binding.

Birth mothers will agree to refrain from smoking, either actively, or remaining in the presence of smokers, and refrain from drinking alcohol or consuming any other drugs, or exposing themselves to any other potential vectors for disease or illness which might harm the developing fetus. They will observe whatever dietary restrictions and prescriptions are considered appropriate to optimizing the health and well-being of the child growing inside them. The mother chose to have the child. The child had no say in choosing its mother.

The contract is intended to defend and promote the rights of the child. No child need be conceived. No-one has the right to reproduce or be a parent just out of whimsy and selfish desire. Only where we ensure in advance that the life chances of the child are going to be actively promoted can reproduction be justified.

The child will grow into its responsibilities as a citizen. It will acquire responsibilities and obligations as it grows.

Social inequality and genetic injustice will not be allowed to be reproduced. This contract is about optimizing procreation and ensuring, as much as possible, an optimal and meritocratic society.

The intention of this contract is to seek to provide each child with the same positive holistic inheritance. This contract will be the inheritance of each child.

Under this contract each child will be conceived with an equivalent potential, and access to the same resources necessary to realize this potential.

Under this contract individuals will only consume value that they have produced. Individual wealth will pass to the state upon that individual's death. It will be used to fund the universal social rights of every citizen, and those of the not-yet-conceived.

Failure to support this contract will ensure that the current system of opportunistic exploitation and reproduction of inherited inequality will be re-produced. It is unethical to re-produce this system. Reproduction reproduces this system.

This contract is about the production of conditions optimal for ensuring every not-yet-conceived child has the most positive life experience possible.

As it is much harder to unlearn superstitions, false beliefs, erroneous arguments, and sub-optimal habits, than it is to learn sound ones in the first place, this contract will ensure that the child will grow up in an environment free from any dogma. This includes religious dogma. The pre-contract world was defined by inequality, denial, violence, and injustice. The contract was introduced to bring about transparency, truth, justice, equality, and solidarity. Dogma is not consistent with these aims.

This contract will ensure that every effort is made to provide the optimal prerequisites for a good life for every new person. In spite of our best efforts we cannot guarantee the outcomes. Only the individual can decide if their life is a gift or a burden. Every person will have control over their 'end-of-life' decisions, and have access to Euthanasia.

Universal and free access to medical, palliative, sexual, and psychological resources will ensure that no person will be compelled to end their own life out of desperation.

There are, however, many foreseeable situations in which euthanasia is a reasonable decision. In any case, this contract will guarantee that the individual's decision will be respected. Each individual will control their own destiny. Everyone will die sooner or later. Death is inevitable. We must come to terms with reality, rather than live in denial.

Euthanasia merely allows us to select the time and method of death. Only the individual can know if their life is worth experiencing. We can not know what happens after death. However we do know with certainty that the traditional religious dogmas claims to knowledge regarding these questions are lies.

This contract will ensure that no-one may seek to make anyone fearful of death. Under this contract no-one may force another, via any means, legal, psychological, or social, to endure a life they do not wish to live out to its natural end.

This contract will seek to make everyone's life a positive, rewarding experience. Where it cannot attain this, the least we can offer is a good, dignified, quick, pain-free death that the individual can initiate on their own terms, without the intervention of any third parties, or need to justify their act to anyone.

We often find ourselves lost in this world of unsatisfying, mundane, routine, and pointless, ineffective labors. We need something to live for. We often abuse our potential for reproduction as a means to our own ends, to have someone to love us, to care for us in our old age, to live through vicariously, to provide a justification for enduring our own lives. We often fail to consider the interests of the not-yet-conceived. This contract is the means to optimizing the holistic inheritances, and thus the life chances of the not-yet-conceived.

How particular individuals, lobby groups, vested interest groups, and institutions react to this contract will reveal their real motivations and agendas. Their responses will validate many of the arguments which made me recognize the need for this contract in the first place.

You cannot now claim ignorance. You have been made aware of your obligations and the likely consequences of conventional, pre-contract re-production.

Your children will have every 'moral' right to sue you in a court of law for your gross negligence, should you fail to observe this contract. You are now morally, and legally, culpable. You will be held accountable now that you have given your informed consent.

Under the planned reproduction program this contract requires, no unplanned pregnancy will occur. As such the only foreseeable grounds for abortion would be in the interests of the child, or where it can be predicted that the life or health of the mother would be jeopardized by carrying a baby to term.

Whose interests are you are considering in your reproductive plans?

Do you have any particular plans for your children? Do you intend that they achieve any particular objective, enter a particular profession, follow a particular religious dogma, or even be there for you in old age? Then you have automatically disqualified yourself from reproduction. You should have no other desire than that the children you are privileged to care for and nurture live happy, fulfilled, satisfying, rewarding lives.

Are you obese, addicted to any drugs legal or otherwise, dissatisfied with your life, your appearance, your intelligence, your talent, or any other aspect of yourself? If so you probably should not reproduce yourself, and your own holistic inheritance. You need to have the qualities the not-yet-conceived would want to have. You need to be a role model for them. Get your own act together before considering imposing your life upon an innocent victim.

Children do not exist to serve your interests. You will, as parents, exist in great part to serve their interests. If you do not revel in the idea of serving their interests, if you do not find great satisfaction at the thought of serving, of being the means to your child's ends, then you should reconsider your motives, and reproductive intentions.

Perhaps perfectionists should not be allowed to parent as they tend to produce neurotic, anxious, worried kids who don't feel good about self, and who feel they have to earn love, acceptance, and approval.

By all means coach a sporting team, be a teacher or tutor, but don't inflict yourself on the not-yet-conceived. Don't condemn them to your life. If you love them, then show it by not reproducing. Parenting is about serving.

Reproduction is about selfishness. Having children to serve your interests is pure slavery, no matter how you dress it up.

Eugenics would entail the screening of eggs and sperm for all manner of potential defects, preventing the 'expression' of particular genetic traits. The main focus would be on eliminating the combination of genes with the same genetic 'defects'. Defects can only be 'expressed' where both the genes of the female and male donors are defective.

Surely no-one, apart from the medical industry who profit from our health problems and misery, could argue against such a screening procedure. Of course once a particular couple discovered that they would be denied a mutual offspring they might begin formulating disingenuous and specious arguments against such a screening process.

What if, in spite of our best precautions and screening, the children in your care are obese, slow, selfish, spiteful, difficult, depressed, maladapted, unpleasant and so on? Are they only worthy of your affection, attention, love, nurturing, and support if they turn out to be good investments? No-one can make any guarantees about how children will turn out. Could you only love nice, cute, charming, winners? If so, you have disqualified yourself from reproduction.

At present most marriages either end in divorce or cold, loveless, frustrating relationships. Children have the right to the care of two parents. Parenting obligations do not end with divorce. This contract will specify in advance what arrangements will be made in the event of the dissolution of the marriage of parents. No court battles will be engaged in. The arrangements will be accepted as part of the contract. Informed consent and participation in the divorce and post-divorce contractual arrangements will be a key element of the contract, and the marriage contract.

This contract would be legally binding. Children would be able to sue their parents and the State should either default on this contract. The contract will stipulate the obligations of the State and Parents.

The State and Parents do owe the not-yet-conceived something. This contract will specify exactly what the unborn has a right to. No child may be produced until the State and potential parents have accepted these obligations, and can demonstrate their capacity to meet them.

This would require the lodgment of security bonds on the part of the parents and the State. A fund would be set up in advance to fund all the liabilities that the contract imposes on the State and parents.

A 'parenting license' would only be granted after this contract has been endorsed and signed by the State and parents.

Parents will undergo genetic tests to ensure that offspring will not inherit avoidable health problems. These include screening for all types of inherited diseases.

Parents will undergo psychological testing to determine their suitability as parents.

Parents will be screened for dogma. Children have the right to choose their beliefs for themselves, and not to have any dogma foisted upon them by their parents. The State is secular. Parents must be capable of allowing their children to develop their own spirituality independent of their parent's beliefs and dogmas.

All children will inherit the same educational budget. Each child will have the right to the same educational resources, independent of their parent's socio-economic position. If private education is considered superior to State Education, then all children will have the same rights to study at any school. Each school will have the same resourcing. Each child will carry the same budget with them, to whichever school they choose to attend. No further education will be able to be purchased by parents. Each student will have a guaranteed educational equality. Each child will inherit a quality education. They will be able to choose where to spend their budget. All education will be secular. No dogma will be allowed.

Christian Scientists believe that they should not seek medical treatment for themselves or their children. They believe in the divine healing of prayer. Many avoidable deaths and much avoidable suffering are the result of this superstitious belief and religious dogma. Christian Science Dogma effectively sacrifices children to its religious dogma. It is a clear example of the dangers of religious dogma.

In 1965 Kevin Anderson QC made an official inquiry into the XXXXX Church for the State of Victoria, Australia. He concluded that 'XXXXXX is a delusional belief system, based on fiction and fallacies and propagated by falsehood and deception... the evidence has shown its theories to be fantastic and impossible, its principles perverted and ill-founded, and its techniques debased and harmful... While making an appeal to the public as a worthy system ... it employs techniques which further its real purpose of securing domination over, and mental enslavement of, its adherents. It... is harmful medically, morally and socially'. I'll leave you to fill in the XXXXX. You could put the name of any church there, and Mr Anderson would be telling the truth. Imagine that, a lawyer, a Queen's Council no less, actually telling the truth, and in public!

Unfortunately most of the more ubiquitous and insidious damage done by religious dogma is less easy to identify and articulate, and therefore make transparent. I hope I have illuminated at least some of the damage done by religious dogma. Comparative religious studies will ensure that each student is exposed to the entire spectrum of religious belief and practice, to counter any narrow dogma they are exposed to in their family. Students will learn about the true nature of religion through studies of Sociology and Philosophy. I am confident my 'Religion' serves these ends.

All children will be guaranteed access to all the dental and medical resources necessary to enjoy life. All medical and dental services will be fully funded. All children will be fully insured.

All children will have access to free public transport independent of where they live.

All children will have guaranteed one-on-one time with each parent which will be enforceable by law. No parents will be allowed to escape their responsibility to provide one-on-one quality time with their children. One parent will be required by law to be present from the time school ends until the time school starts the next day.

Both parents will be required to be present at evening meals and breakfast more or less every day. Each parent will be required to provide at least one full hour of one-on-one time with their children, engaging in meaningful interactions which will also be set down in the contract.

These activities will ensure that all children feel secure and valued by their parents. These activities will foster communication and emotional development. Both father and mother will have equal obligations to their children.

No parent will be able to place any other activity above their child rearing responsibilities. The privileges of parenting come at a cost. Children must be the priority of their parents. This will mean sacrificing other wants and desires during at least the first 18 years of the child's life.

All children must have access to psychological counseling. Their parents will be compelled by the contract to participate in any group counseling and individual counseling that the counselors and psychologists deem necessary to ensuring the emotional and physical security and well-being of the child.

In all instances the needs of the child will outweigh the wants of the parents. The parents decided to become parents. The child had no say in the decision. As such the parents owe their children the minimum prerequisites to ensuring their well-being and happiness. Parents who do not accept that the price of satisfying their desire to reproduce is the opportunity cost of satisfying other selfish desires, and who are not capable of making their children their priority, have no 'moral' (and will have no legal) right to satisfy their desire to be parents.

All children will have access to sexual education and counseling. Children will have a right to confidentiality. The counselor will determine what is in the child's best interests where any conflict of interest arises between the parent's and the child's desires. Children will have access to one-on-one and group counseling with professionals specializing in the field of human sexuality. Such counseling will ensure that each child is empowered and confident in their own sexuality. Each child will be free to express their individual sexuality. All children will be appropriately aware of their sexual health needs. They will be free to give their informed consent to engage in any sexual interactions they chose.

Masturbation will be encouraged. Adolescents will be educated about how to please themselves and their partners, and on the potential problems and responsibilities associated with sexual interactions. Children will be

informed and empowered to exercise their sexuality. Children will be empowered to control their own sexuality, and to ensure that all interactions are based on informed consent. Appropriate education to avoid sexual exploitation and abuse of all sorts will be provided. All sexually mature persons will have access to sexual resources.

Where necessary state brothels will be run. The prostitute will have the same status and respect as any other educational, counseling, or health care professional. They will be sexual health professionals. They will provide state funded services that ensure that every person's minimum sexual needs are met. They will be ensured a respectful and positive treatment by their clients.

No child or adult will ever be forced by conscription to take part in any form of warfare. No defense force personnel will be allowed to act outside of a nation's own political boundaries. Participation in military actions outside of these boundaries will only take place as part of a United Nations military force endorsed by a United Nations resolution. No nation will have veto power over any United Nations resolution. No nation will have veto power over any International court's resolution.

All parents and children will take part in group therapy on a regular, monthly basis. During such interactions parents and children will share their problems and seek solutions together. Transparency will be sought. Collective ignorance will be eliminated. Parents will be forced to face their own limitations, and to grow, for the sake of their children. Children will always be aware that they are not responsible for their parent's problems.

The child's responsibility will be limited to participating actively in their own educational and personal development. It will be made clear to the child that they are valued, accepted, approved of, and loved, unconditionally. Their existence was keenly sought by their parents. They are the priority of their parents. This position will be legally enforceable.

All children will be ensured three high quality nutritious, vegan meals each day. During schooldays each child will be provided with a nutritious vegan morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack. Each child will be guaranteed the minimum fruit and vegetable intake required for optimum health and well-being. These will be provided in the form of tasty and nutritious vegan meals and snacks. They will be provided at no cost to the family or child.

Bullying, intimidation, and victimization in any form will not be tolerated. All perpetrators and victims will be counseled and managed. No child will feel threatened or uncomfortable at school, or during any collective or private activity. All children will be trained in assertiveness and self-confidence. The principle of zero-tolerance will apply to any threats to a child's health and wellbeing. Activities and processes will target the positive development of every child's self-esteem. The priority of the education system will be to ensure that each child develops a positive sense of self, and self-confidence.

Where a conflict of interests arises between the needs of the child and the wants of the parents, the child's needs will take priority. Promotions, holidays, new cars, house ownership, and so on, will be sacrificed in order to satisfy the desire to be a parent. You can't have everything. Your child owes you nothing. You owe your child everything. If you cannot commit to this contract, then you have no business becoming a parent.

The purpose of this contract is to inform the parents of their responsibilities. They will be held accountable by a special forum or court with the powers to enforce these obligations. The intention is to protect the interests of the not-yet-conceived. Parents will, by signing this contract after a period of training and counseling, be giving their informed consent and acknowledging their recognition and acceptance of their responsibilities as parents.

The parenting training will include training in the sorts of strategies and behaviors which are covered in many of those popular television shows in which trained professional 'nannies' advise parents on how to 'parent'.

Parenting is not for everyone. In fact the majority of people will not be able to meet the parenting licensing requirements nor be in a position to enter into such a contract in good faith.

Those parents who cannot provide their not-yet-conceived with the minimum holistic inheritance as outlined in this contract will have alternative opportunities to be able to satisfy most of their desires for nurturing the next generation in a host of ways. They will be able to form close relationships with children as carers, teachers,

counselors, sporting instructors, uncles, aunts, baby-sitters, and so on. The duties and privileges of caring for children will be shared across the wider community. Parents will be supported in their roles. Parents will be the primary care givers, but they will have many opportunities to share the burdens and to allow others to share the privileges and benefits of caring for children.

Transparency will be attained. Everyone will be aware that parenting is a privilege that carries with it huge obligations. No-one will enter into parenthood in ignorance or denial.

The not-yet-conceived's interests will take priority over the interests of the parents.

Only parents who have their future child's interests as a priority will be granted the privilege of becoming parents.

Reproduction will not be seen as the norm.

Reproduction will in fact be defined as the exception.

Reproduction will only be entered into after serious consideration and evaluation.

Reproduction will only take place after stringent genetic and psychological screening of potential parents, counseling, training, and education.

Children owe their parents nothing. This contract specifies what the parents and State owe the not-yet-conceived. Only where these obligations can and will be met, will parents be issued with a license.

At present the interests of parents and the State are given priority over the interests of the not-yet-conceived. At present reproduction occurs in order to meet the State's needs (as expressed by Australian Prime Minister John Howard's line 'one for the nation'), and to satisfy the selfish egotistical desires of parents.

Currently the rights of the not-yet-conceived are only addressed on a very superficial level. These rights are addressed much too late to have anything but a superficial effect on the child's well-being and holistic inheritance.

A public forum must be held to further clarify the form and content of this contract. Contributions and participation must be invited from the wider community and the professions most connected to parenting. Current parents must share their positive and negative experiences of parenting. The reality of parenting must be shared with all other parents and potential parents.

The responsible and informed decision not to reproduce must be validated and celebrated as a holistically enlightened, ethical, principle-driven one.

People must be held accountable by being compelled to undergo a thorough, transparent, and rigorous vetting process before being allowed to reproduce. Reproduction requires social resources. Reproduction is subsidized by those without children, and by those who will not become parents. As such these people have a right to have a say as to under what conditions other people should be allowed to reproduce.

Reproduction must never be allowed to serve the interests of anyone other than the not-yet-conceived. There is no excuse for bringing life into this world to serve the interests of anything already in this world.

Producing children to serve other's interests is slavery. Parents do not have the right to reproduce to serve their own interests, or to satisfy their own desires.

The State must be the protector of the not-yet-conceived's rights. This must be the priority of the State in when it regulates reproduction.

Children must never be produced to serve State interests, such as economic stability, military power, economic power, or to prop up State superannuation funds, GDP, stock market returns, or real-estate values.

Every child that you produce will suffer, and will die. This is a fact of life. Life is hard. Life is risky. We should only ever consider producing new life when we have done everything within our power to ensure that the life it will experience will be a positive one. All new life must be ensured an equal holistic inheritance. All new life must share the same opportunities for positive life experience.

At present a parent's genetic, social, economic, status, class, and privileges, inequalities, talents, dogmas, and potential in general, are reproduced when they reproduce themselves. The system of social relationships, of inequality, and of opportunistic exploitation of inequality, is also reproduced.

The aim of this contract is to ensure that each new life will have a similarly positive holistic inheritance. It will be rewarded for its efforts. Society will be truly meritocratic. People will earn what they consume. People will get what they deserve. People will be rewarded according to the effort, sacrifice, and risk they invest in their own lives.

Each person deserves and will be ensured the same positive inheritance. The playing field will be level. The life we bequeath our society's children will be a gift. At present the legacy we bequeath is most often a negative one, a burden.

This contract has the intention of optimizing the inheritance and life chances of every child that is conceived, rather than just the lucky few. This will mean that fewer children are conceived. This is no problem. There will be more resources for each child. This is a good thing.

Many of us are already behaving responsibly in relation to reproduction. We have decided that we cannot guarantee our not-yet-conceived the inheritance required to ensure they have a positive life experience. We are behaving in the interests of the not-yet-conceived. We are sacrificing the joys of parenthood in the interests of our not-yet-conceived children. Our decision should be respected, validated, and congratulated. The State must support our morally responsible attitude by providing free 'harvesting' and secure storage of sperm and eggs for every citizen of reproductive age, followed by free surgical sterilization.

If the military, the so-called defense forces are actually there for the purpose of defense, then they need never operate outside of their own political boundaries. The military are rarely defense forces. They are an extension of political power. They are offensive forces, tools for imperialism and colonialism. There is no justification for unilateral or even multi-lateral military action outside of a nation's borders. All military expenditures must be limited to those essential for actual homeland defense. A paramilitary would exist in which the police forces and so on would be integrated into a homeland security force. This would avoid the waste of military personnel who consume resources but provide no services most of the time. A nuclear deterrent would ensure no-one would invade. The military at present are merely economic mercenaries sent overseas to enforce unfair trade relationships and economic exploitation.

We need to develop alternatives to oil and gas, due to the politics involved. We should not trade with nations that do not respect the United Nations Convention on Human Rights. We cannot, 'morally' afford to.

The right to freedom from compulsory military service for all humans must be universally recognized and institutionalized.

We are confronted with natural calamities on a regular basis. As populations grow, the costs in terms of human suffering are ever greater. Living in areas of extreme heat, extreme cold, disease carrying mosquitoes, and predictable natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, flooding, drought, and so on, are all unnecessary. Human communities should only be developed in those geographical areas that are more or less ideal for human habitation.

We have located large populations in geographical areas which are prone to natural disasters. We build cities in cyclone prone areas. We build cities on coastal plains prone to earthquakes, tidal waves, and now thanks to global warming, eventual submergence under the world's oceans. In fact we already build cities below the current sea level. The recent Tsunami disasters, earthquakes in Haiti, and the flooding of New Orleans, demonstrated the costs of such naiveté and arrogance.

Our population growth is exceeding our supplies of fresh water for domestic and agricultural consumption. Billions of people live in unbearably hot, humid, polluted conditions, without access to fresh drinking water, fresh breathing air, sanitation services, or other modern 'conveniences'.

When our goals are lives justifiable in themselves for everyone, we will focus on quality rather than quantity. We will manage our population size to optimize it, to harmonize it with the available natural resources. We will locate this population in the optimal geographical locations. We will limit the size of our human communities to the level optimal to ensuring a positive life experience for all members of these communities. We will not fight against the logic of our environment.

Much of the earth could be returned to wilderness. There could be small communities built around the exploitation of natural resources, such as mining towns, logging towns, and some intensive agricultural areas.

An optimal population size, and an optimal geographical location of human communities, would allow an optimisation of energy and other natural resources. Our resource needs would be such that we could focus on exploiting only those resources that were most easily exploited, and with the least negative impacts on our environment. We could grow grains in the optimal geographical areas for grains production. We could mine only the richest and most accessible mineral, oil, gas, and metal deposits. We could grow coffee exclusively in the best coffee growing areas. We would therefore only grow the best coffee. Fruits could be grown where they grow best, with the least fertilizer, and the least pesticides. We could produce the best produce, with the lowest opportunity costs, and the lowest environmental impact. We could afford to be extremely selective. We could operate in harmony with our environment, rather than seeking to force it to our ends.

Some further elements of my Protocols

It is amazing that organizations and industries still call for self-regulation, in the face of their history of cynically self-serving lies and abuses. No organization can regulate itself. It is as they say, the equivalent of letting the fox watch over the chicken coop. The basis of any society, especially one during a fundamental transition into a society governed by enlightened, holistic, principle driven reason, is the existence of organizations whose members are trained in the highest arts of interrogation and holistic, enlightened reason. They will interrogate all conditions and situations and circumstances to determine, cooperatively, whether justice is being served in principle, and whether the optimal conditions are being produced to optimize our life experience as a collective of individuals.

The mission of such an organization will be to generate the highest possible level of transparency across the whole of the society. We must be able to determine the real costs and benefits, and the real distribution of those costs and benefits, so that resources can be employed to the greatest good of the whole community. Secrecy produces suspicion and facilitates corruption.

There would need to be a cultural shift to honestly recognizing qualitative superiority, in arguments, in practices, in people, and in organizing principles. Qualitatively superior things would need to be recognized and reproduced. We would have real meritocracy. People would not be able to buy influence. Influence would not be bought and sold in a marketplace of privilege, power, and advantage. Definitions and the practices and institutions that emerge from them would be arrived at through transparent processes of intellectual rigor and holistic, enlightened, principle-driven reasoning. All dogma would be recognized as equally dogmatic. No dogma would be allowed to inform decision making. Spirituality would become freed of dominant hegemonic interests.

Power and influence must be distributed transparently. People must not be allowed to buy or inherit influence and power. They should 'earn' it by demonstrating their competence and motivation to creatively produce real value for the whole of society. Some people are more competent, innovative, and creative. Their talents should therefore be employed to the good of all. They should be provided with the resources and influence to realize their potential. Of course others would be jealous and envious, and seek to undermine them. This is a dimension of human nature that is unavoidable. But those allowed to realize their potential for value production would not be exploiting their gifts merely to enrich themselves. There would in fact need to be limits on personal wealth and privilege.

This would promote authenticity. People would seek out work that they found personally rewarding, work for which they had a vocation, rather than the work that received the highest pay and social status. Financial reward is an artificial and extrinsic motivator. As a result of the distortions it produces, people find themselves in jobs that are not satisfying. They would rather do other work, but would lose out financially, and in terms of status, if they did so. They are addicted to the material and social rewards of their profession. If there was more or less parity in the rewards and benefits of all forms of work, then we would behave more authentically. We would be able to approach work as a sacred expression of serving others.

The current labor market system, the system of relations and the dogma it is based on, have all violated the sacredness of work. They have all distorted the true meaning of work. People will do things they hate, and which they know harm other living creatures, even their own loved ones, in return for money, status, privilege, prestige, and power. They are seduced by the apparent security and material privileges that money represents. They will sacrifice their 'vocation', their 'holy' calling. They will not be authentic. Their integrity will be damaged. They will not be whole. They will never know ease and peace, and true security. They will 'buy into' the system of oppression, alienation, and dis-ease.

People should not be able to buy status or prestige. Status and prestige are social goods that need to be distributed only to those who can make the greatest contributions to the collective good. Status and prestige are tools, to avoid the necessity of people having to continually negotiate their status and prestige in every new interaction. Once people have proved themselves, they should be granted a particular social standing. They should

be given an audience, and access to resources commensurate with the good they can achieve with them for the collective. Of course they should not be granted automatic deity status and power just because of past achievements, but they should enjoy the privilege of our trust. Transparency will ensure accountability and make corruption impossible.

We would not distinguish between people based on their age or years of service. Under conditions of transparency people would earn status based on true meritocracy. Of course the older and more senior people will feel threatened by the young lions, and will envy their talents and abilities. But under the conditions of the whole new system, people will feel secure enough to recognize talent, and not feel threatened as a person, not feel less because another is more.

The talented will be using their talents for the good of the collective, and won't be excessively rewarded themselves. Talents will be valued as a means to the collective good, rather than as free rides to luxury and wealth. The whole meaning of what it means for another to be competent or talented will change for us. Whereas previously we would feel inadequate, and be jealous of the privileges and wealth the talents will bring others, under the whole new system, we will recognize the talents of others as good for us, as they will be used to benefit us all, and we will feel fundamentally secure in ourselves. In this way other people's achievements will not fundamentally threaten our feelings of security and self-esteem, they will represent a net value to our collective wellbeing. What is good for the others will be good for us.

We would have the personal sense of security to judge things based on their merits, without fear of how they will reflect on us, on how they might diminish our relative value to the community. There would be less reason for jealousy of the privileges and wealth others superiority might provide them. We would collectively 'own' talents and achievements. We would all recognize that our inheritance is luck, and that without all of us, the whole cannot function. We would encourage individual achievement in the interests of the whole. We would all bathe in the light of the brightest among us.

Remember that the gross inequities in genetic and social inheritance present in the pre-Protocols era would not be present in the next generation. Everyone would have a basically fair distribution of talents and positive characteristics. People would all be different, but there would be no gross inequalities. In any case the society would be one of caring and sharing, of acceptance and approval, an intimate society based on trust and mutual respect. People would nurture each other. They would not be victimized for being more clever or talented, or for being less gifted. Whatever their individual inheritances, they would seek to bequeath the best inheritances upon the next generation.

The average person will of course be better off, when the privileges and material benefits of the privileged and powerful are redistributed. Even the previously 'privileged' people will ultimately benefit, as they will get to live more authentic lives, and will ultimately be more secure and happy. The only real costs or sacrifices will be the loss of the ability to dream of a life of luxury and privilege free of personal effort, and the right to reproduce oneself as one wishes, without consideration for the interests of one's offspring. Many people will be denied the ego satisfactions of projecting themselves into the future through their offspring. They will not be able to show the world what they themselves could have achieved had they had the opportunity, by pushing their children to realize their own failed ambitions.

As generations progress, though, it will become less necessary to manage reproduction, as everyone will have the optimal genetic inheritance to pass onto their children.

All people will still have access to children and to exercising their need to give love and affection. Children will be brought up and cared for by many people, to share both the benefits and responsibilities of child rearing. Both the children and the parents would benefit. All time shared with children would be real quality time for the carers and children. The parents would not be overtaxed, exhausted, and overwhelmed. The children would always be in the company of patient and caring people who were enjoying the interactions, and therefore passing on the message to the children that they are welcome, valued, accepted, and approved of. They would also learn real security

and trust, as they would have had positive experiences with a wide range of people. They would not be desperately dependent on a narrow group of people for this sense of security.

Of course many parents selfishly want to be the only 'darling mommy' or 'darling daddy' in their children's lives. They want their children to be dependent on them. They are basically insecure themselves, and want their children to be dependent on them, to guarantee that they will love them, and won't abandon them.

Freud was surprised to find, and many parents are sad to discover, that their young children have virtually zero loyalty when it comes to their parents. They will adopt any 'darling mommy' or 'darling daddy' who cares for them. Children aren't concerned about 'biology'. They are concerned about devoted, caring, loving, affectionate, supportive, nurturing, protective, parenting.

We must as a collective promote the interests of 'our' children. When they are the collective's children, the collective will seek to promote their interests. They would not seek to promote the advantages of a few to the disadvantage of the many, to promote the benefits of the few, at the cost of injustice for the many. They would seek that every child had the resources and opportunities to reach its potential.

They would not waste resources vainly promoting their own untalented child, at the expense of depriving children with real talents and potential the opportunities to realize these potentials, without the narrow selfish interests of a parent. Everyone would benefit from the talents and potential of the children of the collective, as they would be promoted and used to further the interests of the collective. The children would grow up secure, and authentic, and not need to be better than anyone else, or to judge others harshly for not being so lucky as themselves.

We have to reduce the 'cost' of being wrong, to define being wrong as merely the intermediary step to being right. We must acknowledge the strength and character it takes to admit to having been wrong. Then people will not have a vested interest in pretending nothing is wrong, in covering up, and in mobbing whistle-blowers and clever co-workers. People will not need to feel defensive. They will be rewarded for being open, rather than punished. People should not feel threatened by more competent or talented colleagues, or by their own mistakes. Innovation should be rewarded, and the behaviors that promote creative risk taking should be recognized and applauded, independent of the immediate results.

No-one would need to feel threatened where there was real solidarity, and the focus was on innovative value production and collective rewards, rather than excessive individual status and privilege. People would co-operate, and be rewarded and recognized for co-operating. There should be no advantage to be attained by competitive secrecy. Transparency will allow that all participants would receive their due recognition.

Ideas would be evaluated on their own merits, not in terms of whose prestige and status might be threatened or promoted. There will be more openness and freedom to experiment. The success of a venture, which is often unpredictable, will not be a major determinant in the entrepreneur's material or psychological well-being. People will not be granted rewards way out of relation to their efforts, as is the case presently.

In the competitive capitalist model we have, only market success is rewarded, independent of the real value of the innovation, or the effort made. This means that people are desperate for 'success'. Their well-being depends directly on it. They will 'play dirty' and play games and invest a lot of wasted energy and resources into political activities which produce no real value for anyone, but merely consume a lot of resources, and mystify rather than produce transparency. Success is rewarded, no matter how it is achieved. You can even break the law if you can get away with it. What matters is merely winning. Everything is dependent on winning. You will steal other people's ideas, and undermine your competition. Even your co-workers represent competition, as they may be better than you, and take your job, or that promotion or bonus that you want for yourself.

In an open system no resources will be wasted on impression management. Substance will count. Transparency will make any efforts at impression management pointless. Effort would be rewarded more than pure luck. The rewards of the collective efforts would be more or less equally distributed according to the difficulty, stress, and effort associated with different types of labor. But only labor would be rewarded. Interest payments for any type of loan and all returns to investments and savings would be capped to a reasonable level. Labor, and sacrifice would

be recognized as the only means of value production. Capital would be mostly collective. Private capital would be seen as 'delayed gratification'. The sacrifice for delaying gratification would be rewarded modestly.

Borrowers offer those people who haven't decided how to spend their money the possibility of storing their money whilst maintaining its value. Otherwise, while people were saving up for a large purchase, or deciding on what to buy, the value of their money would be reduced by inflation. It is ironic that the current logic defines borrowers as gaining all the benefits from loans. There would also be limits on what amounts could be borrowed for discretionary consumption as compared to real investments. People should not be allowed to place themselves in debt for conspicuous consumption such as luxury goods and services. Loans should only be allowed for the purchase of homes and other sorts of real investments.

There would be limits on personal wealth. The value of fixed goods such as land would be fixed, and would not change due to supply and demand. People would be able to direct their resources how they saw fit, but there would be no excessively powerful cars on the roads. There would be racing tracks, offering the opportunity for motor sports, but not the excessive investment we have today in competitive professional racing. Sport will be recognized as entertainment and recreation, but the winners would not gain the huge privileges they are rewarded with today. The victory will be an end in itself.

The abolition of non-informative marketing would mean that lucrative product placements and sponsorships would evaporate. There is nothing wrong with grown adults playing competitive games per se. It is however obscene that someone gain access to enormous wealth and privilege for doing something that ultimately produces no real value for anyone, apart from escapist entertainment. The same holds true for other entertainers. It is morally wrong that child-care workers earn a subsistence living while someone who can swing a golf club, hit a cricket ball, run fast, swim fast, or drive a car round and round in circles really fast, are rewarded with excessive luxuries and status.

That grown adults will spend their entire lives seeking to run or swim faster than other grown adults speaks volumes about our current level of evolution. Humans will take any activity and turn it into a competition for status and prestige. Take a look at the variety of sports that will be broadcast on any weekend. Humans will take any opportunity to seek to be better than their peers, at anything. It's amazing what humans have made sports of. Being better at a sport produces absolutely no real value for anyone. It is pure egotism. Huge amounts of resources are wasted in promoting such activities.

Children die due to a lack of access to medical treatment, and medical research, as the resources that could have been invested in their wellbeing is being consumed in promoting sport and advertising junk products. It speaks volumes about the priorities of our current society. People have money for Coca-Cola, cigarettes, alcohol, and uselessly powerful cars, but have no money for public health, education, or housing.

In a society defined by holistically enlightened, principle-directed reason, people will first do what provides real value to the community, what needs to be done, and only after these needs are being addressed, what they find intrinsically rewarding or interesting. There will be no excess privilege or luxury to be won. People's behavior will be directed by values and value production, rather than by lust for excessive privileges and luxuries. There will be little unproductive jealousy and envy.

A fairer distribution of recognition and wages will allow a much greater sense of solidarity to grow than currently imagined under the current system. Things will be valued for their objective, real, value. Narcissistic status will not be marketed at the expense of things of real value. All political lobbying will be transparent. Politics will not be open to manipulation by narrow interest groups and their lobby groups. There will be no private campaign financing. Remember a typical U.S senator must raise \$30,000 U.S per day to finance their next political campaign. People do not hand out money without expecting something in return. They are buying political influence. Thus lobby groups, rather than the voters, ultimately 'own' politicians. There will be no disingenuous specious sophistry otherwise known as advertising, marketing, and spin doctoring.

In the same way that great sex increases your sex drive, because it is rewarding, the positive experiences and rewards that would be experienced under conditions of solidarity, transparency, and holistically enlightened, informed consent, would reflexively increase acceptance of the system. This would iteratively motivate people to increase transparency, to increase intimacy, trust, and justice. Work would once more be sacred, the sacred act of serving and giving. People would have discretionary income to satisfy their particular personal preferences and tastes. The market would operate with a transparent, visible hand. The operations of the market would no longer be invisible. There would be no speculation or market manipulation. People would seek out what they intrinsically value, rather than what some clever marketing strategy has lead them to desire.

Resources would not be wasted in propping up privilege and power, in political games and deceptions. There would be no mobbing, as no-one would have anything to gain from it. There would be nothing to lose by making mistakes. There would be no great reason to envy someone their talents and achievements. They would be ends in themselves, rather than means to excessive individual privileges and luxury. Musicians would make the music that they wanted to, authentic music that expressed their thoughts and feelings, rather than what the record company producer thought would make money for the record company.

People would not strive for money and power and status as extrinsic means to feeling secure and valued, accepted and approved of. They would all have access to opportunities to earn real approval, to contribute, and gain mutual trust and approval, and security. Things would be 'real'. People would be 'real'. Interactions would be authentic. Value would have real 'value'. No-one would have to fake anything, from orgasm to happiness. No-one would have to wear masks of any kind.

The ultimate goal is the production of a world defined by synergies.

Philosophy can provide compelling arguments, but at the end of the day the majority will simply deny or just ignore them, and believe what they want to believe. You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it think.

I have thirsted for a better understanding of my world, to increase the chances of my experiences of it being positive ones. The process of writing this book was about quenching that thirst as best I can, given the resources that I have.

There are some questions that I have not been able to definitively answer. Perhaps they will never be amenable to being definitively answered. Or maybe they have been, and I'm just not satisfied yet, or they are satisfying enough for my human psychology.

As a philosopher I believe it is better to leave unanswered questions open, for others to solve, rather than to pretend to have all the answers. Asking the right questions is a real contribution, as without the right questions people go looking for the answers in the wrong places, and don't find them. Good questions lead others in productive, fruitful directions.

Even merely arousing other's curiosity is a positive thing, as it might be the 'first step' in their own 'thousand mile march' that leads them to productive, valuable insights.

Philosophy is team-work. Some philosophers stumble across the important questions, and others stumble across the important answers, while engaged in disciplined, open-minded, 'right mindfulness'. Philosophy is a collaborative process. I have been 'collaborating' with philosophers from thousands of years ago, and much of the time I wasn't even aware of it.

I have made my contribution. I hope to have some positive impact on my world, and the world that your children will inherit, and which I may perhaps not be able to avoid inheriting 'next time around'.

I hope what you have read here becomes a positive tool for you and your children to change our world and their world for the better.

Maybe you will be the one to raise the ultimate questions, or find the ultimate answers. Good luck.

The universe does speak if you will listen. Some have better hearing, and greater enthusiasm for listening. Their situation motivates them to pay attention, to be on the look-out, to listen, to seek. These people are often referred to as prophets. The secular version of the prophet is the holistically enlightened philosopher.

There are so many things shouting for your attention that you are not even aware that the other voices existed. With no realization of their existence, you had no reason to be listening for them.

I hope to be involved in the production of an internet portal aimed at bringing the greatest transparency to the current dominant hegemonic definitions and systems of relations, and offering more optimal alternatives.

I will not reproduce the world as it is. I may not be able to change it, but I will not give my informed consent to it as it is, and how it is likely to be, in the absence of my 'Protocols'.

I will only give my informed consent for the sort of world that would be defined by my 'Protocols'.

I hope I have produced something of positive value, and that it realizes its potential for producing a better world. I hope the world I envision has a future. I hope we can escape history, and optimize our future life experience. I wish us all the best of luck. There are lots of beautiful things in this world. It is worth trying to optimize it. However the world as it is, is not worthy of reproduction. I would only reproduce the sort of world defined by my Eden Protocols.

Please do not take anything I have written out of context. This document and all the arguments in it must be taken as a whole. The value of the arguments presented is holistic.

My experiences with people and life have lead me to have little faith or trust in this world or humanity. However I have done my best to understand TROONATNOOR, and to find the optimal response to it. I do my best to be a 'cheerful' realist.

The current state of affairs is not an inheritance that I could, with good conscience, reproduce. I am therefore seeking to change the world into one which I could affirm and validate.

As a Philosopher I don't claim to be 'better' than anyone else, only better at some things. Only a very human philosopher, with all the human frailties, can hope to reveal the realities of our natures. At the same time I have of course been the 'beneficiary' of a certain inheritance that produced and facilitated my philosophical potential, and lead to my being 'better' at that narrow range of things philosophers need to be good at. Unfortunately this has been to my personal disadvantage in most conventional senses.

There are lots of people out there smarter than me, and more eloquent. I am relying on such people to make my arguments clearer, tighter, and more eloquent. I have devoted intense effort over more than two decades to writing this book. I have drafted and redrafted it. It has endured many revisions as the writing process enlightened the writer. I have continued to read as widely as possible, and have humbly included the arguments of many people.

The success of this book is as much dependent on the effort, intelligence and good intentions of you, the reader, as it was on me, the writer. It is ultimately you, the reader, which produces the final draft of this manuscript. I thank you in advance for your efforts.

Thank you for taking the time and effort of trying to understand what I have tried to express. I wish I could have made my point clearer, easier to comprehend, and less demanding to follow. I did try. Over and over again. But at some point I've got to let my 'baby' go. It isn't perfect. I think that if you want to understand what I have written, then you will. It was like that all my life. People had to want to understand me. Most didn't.

Please contact me if you can help me find a publisher, translate this page into any foreign language, or provide space on a server. If you find any factual errors, or errors of logic, please contact me. I would be happy to be able to reference some of the television documentaries I've referred to also, if you are familiar with them. I had to resubmit my first sociology essay and add 'fake' references' as my lecturer told me he would otherwise fail me for having too few reference. I received a High Distinction for that essay.

I'm happy to put in any legitimate 'references' here to draw people's attention to convergences between my own arguments and those of other people, if you notice any that I haven't. I keep finding more and more. Reality is reality, so it shouldn't surprise anyone that many people become aware of 'the realities of our natures, and the nature of our realities' (TROONATNOOR), and formulate and express the same arguments. I've been as honest about my 'inspirations' and 'sources' as possible.

In any case it was 'puppet-Markus' who wrote this. This manuscript is the product of my holistic inheritance. The only credit I deserve is for the sacrifice and effort I put into formulating these arguments and trying to articulate them. Philosophy, or any other work, is no more morally deserving as 'work' than cleaning toilets is. I don't deserve any more praise than a hard-working cleaner. However I do deserve to have greater access to particular resources, those required to have my 'voice' heard, and to have the arguments I have developed made accessible to, and unavoidable by, as many people as possible.

I would like to thank all those hard-working people who made it possible for me to do my own particular form of hard work. They produced the room I live in, the bed I sleep in, the T.V I watch, the food I eat, the clothes I wear, and so on. They deserve the same recognition and reward for their effort and sacrifice as I do. The reflex is that I also deserve to be able to earn enough from my own work to live. Up until now I have earned nothing for my labors.

Please remember that philosophers have the right to be rewarded for their efforts like everyone else. We all have different holistic inheritances. If yours is ultimately more financial than 'philosophical', then you can help according to your means, by contributing according to your inheritance. The same applies to any other form of 'inheritance' or talents, connections, or skills you have. Your contribution will facilitate the realization of the 'best of all possible worlds' as much as my own efforts. Let us find synergies together, to build a world defined by synergy!

I am capable of approaching a true synthesis, as I am indifferent to what the truth is. I can take or leave humans. I have no emotional investment in any particular definitions of TROONATNOOR. I have no need to

repress, deny, or delude myself or anyone else. I am committed to seeking the truth. If I find nothing, like Socrates, I will accept this. If life is unbearable due to my envy of those more fortunate, I will die. I will not allow myself to be their slave, nor will I destroy everyone's fun just because life sucks for me. I am not for revolution. I don't like violence. I like evolution, and positive selection. I don't want to take the responsibility for deceptive 'noble lies'.

My optimal ethic generator is the ideal faith, and it is based on reason and not desire. It deserves to become the new faith. However I would never employ violence to this end, as others are more ruthless than me, and would be guaranteed to destroy me before I attained the ends that might have justified these means. I detest those who are so arrogant as to lie to others about their own intentions.

True nobility does not employ deception. It rests on its righteousness. Life is such a brief absurd thing, that I could never justify deceiving people and denying them full informed consent and transparency. The only thing I might do is regulate their reproduction. Initially this might need to be done secretly. However this will probably happen when robots take the place of humans as the main producers of value, and the masses become bothersome to the beneficiary classes, or perhaps one day the robots themselves.

The story of the 'Golem' in the Jewish quarter of Prague converges well with the 'robot wars' of the 'Terminator' film series. In the story the Jews make a huge man out of clay. If you wrote a command on a piece of paper, rolled it up, and then placed it in its mouth, the Golem would carry out whatever command you had written on the paper. The convergence between this 'Golem' and today's computers and tomorrow's robots is amazing. Of course the tale of the Golem does not end well. He 'runs amok', destroying his 'makers'.

Perhaps I have given up on humans, and do not need to regret this. I always admired the cyborg as a superior experience machine. I would keep the optimal humans as an alternative, but breed them as a car designer designs the cars they wish to drive, the architect designs the habitations they want to live in, and so on. There is nothing 'sacred' about our bodies. They are mere experience engines, biological machines which must justify themselves in terms of their performance, their delivery of lives worth living.

The religious can 'go to heaven' and be with their gods. They are perverse, absurd, and neurotic. God save us from the religious and their religions! We are the product of evolution. However we are entering upon the true end of a long history of negative selection, and the beginning of a new era of positive selection.

First we are dismayed at losing our place at the center of the universe, then at the realization that our wills are not free. Freud got there before me, but as his ideas never became popular, like Hume and all the others, I had to find my way to the same conclusions the hard way. Now I am there I can see why. And I can have little hope that I will get any further convincing you than they did. Now I say let us transcend our initial negative response. We are now free to produce optimal experience engines. We are freed from a need for meaning other than pleasure and satisfaction. We are freed from religion, from god, from free will. We will stop punishing people for their inheritance, including ourselves. We can calculate how a rational person would act, and put determinants in place to ensure we will act that way.

We can focus on our response-ability, and respond optimally to our condition. Of course it is possible we are all means to some other sort of beings ends. We can really have no idea. So much is possible. But what we can do is eliminate the lies, the myths, the illusions, and replace them with more likely candidates for truth which will give us all a much better chance of living lives worth living, and guarantee us a quick, painless, easy, escape from lives not worth living.

Stop being slaves to the beneficiary classes. If you were not conceived a member of their limited numbers, or conceived with some amazing talent you can convert into membership, then you will have virtually no chance of joining them in their satisfying lives of freedom, luxury, and privilege. Your best odds are with me. Democritus, Epicurus, and Lucretius killed the lie of god millennia ago, Nietzsche's Zarathustra found no-one in the market place had heard about it. I am here to remind you, and to get rid of the stinking, rotting corpse. You like the emotional masturbation of being loved by your god? You are welcome to enjoy it. But don't coerce anyone else to play along.

Don't enslave people. Stop torturing animals. How can you possibly deserve justice if you are unjust, cruel, and inflict pain on other sentient beings with no need? Top of the food chain are you? Billions of parasitic bacteria and viruses beg to differ. You think any god would care about you when you don't care about all the other sentient beings he created, according to your story?

I think I will focus on robots from now on. You can program them to be consistent, logical, fair, transparent, and deserving of lives worth living. Anyone who does not support euthanasia, and at least a vegetarian lifestyle, cannot ever claim any right to justice or consideration. Do you expect others to treat you better than you treat others? I am aware that everything is determined, so I do not judge you, only your actions.

However if you want to make the world one worth living in, for the countless billions of years you might be here, then read TROONATNOOR a few more times, and think about all the ideas presented here.

My question for you is this. What are you doing now, to make your next lives worth living? God can't help you, but I have something to offer. I have done nothing more than all the other prophets, except I have never deceived you. Sure you might prefer to be deceived. Fact is, if your god, spoke through any of them, then the same god definitely speaks through me.

My plans are to make a more socially-democratic form of capitalism work for everyone. This will require the management of reproduction in the interests of the not-yet-conceived. It will require the establishment of complete transparency. Cash will need to be eliminated and replaced with electronic transactions which will be processed through one central clearing authority. This will allow complete transparency. It will eliminate the 'black market' and tax avoidance. Marketing will focus on discovering what people want, and informing them about products. All products will be evaluated by independent authorities to provide the consumer with real, useful information about products.

Today marketing costs account for up to a third of the retail price. It will become simple for consumers to compare prices and performance. Retailing would be reduced to providing products at a fixed retail margin. Retail would cease to be 'for profit'. Most middle-men will be eliminated from the process, thus reducing waste. Standard accounting practices will be enforced universally. Limits on personal wealth-consumption over a life-time will be implemented.

Universal identity cards would enable every transaction of a person to be identified for tax purposes. Data would be centralized but at the same time fragmented. Algorithms would constantly change the relationship between individual items of information and the person they relate to. This means that hackers might gain individual pieces of information, but they would never be able to determine to whom which piece belonged.

All transactions would then be processed cash-free, through a central clearing house. Health insurance premiums would be calculated based on lifestyle choices. People would be given informed consent as to the statistical risks they incurred through diet and behavioral choices, and the associated costs, which they would share accordingly. Possibly Hobbes suggestion of taxing only consumption would be implemented.

Together with the identity cards and central clearing house for all transactions, this would eliminate opportunities for tax evasion and black markets. Barter would be criminalized. Drugs, pornography, and prostitution would all be legal, regulated, and taxed. Tax evasion or barter would be a serious offense, as it risked undermining the entire system. This system would minimize the costs and administrative burden of taxation collection. It would be simple.

Taxation would also be reformed, so that income could be spread across a life-time. As all transfers would be done through the one electronic system, the costs of collecting tax would be minimal, taxation could be simplified, and avoidance would become impossible. Education and training would be reformed. People would have access to education and training that was meaningful for them. Wasteful, pointless processes would be eliminated.

Everything that could benefit from regulation would be regulated. Independent authorities would oversee all systems to ensure compliance in deed, and not just 'impression management'. There would be a zero tolerance of all forms of violence. Inequality would exist, but would be kept within bounds, by increasing the lowest common

denominator when it comes to holistic inheritances, and the redistribution of windfalls. However superior ideas will be allowed to flourish. This is the most complex challenge. Authentic competition will be encouraged. Sacrifice, effort, and risk-taking will be encouraged and rewarded within reasonable limits. Innovators will be rewarded. Jealousy and envy will be targeted directly. TROONATNOOR will be made as transparent as possible. Society will be made transparent, while protecting individual privacy as far as possible. The least attractive jobs will be rotated and shared by everyone. However there will be zero tolerance of mobbing, victimization, and all forms of violence.

I have no illusions about how nasty, infantile, and vicious the average person is, especially when in groups which encourage and feed their intrinsic natures, rather than manage and regulate it. I subscribe to no naive illusions of noble-savages, golden ages, or blank-slates. I believe in optimisation through positive selection, regulation, and the unequal reward of unequal effort, sacrifice, and risk-taking. I validate the superiority of some individuals, while validating the fact that all value production is ultimately social, and that therefore windfalls should be redistributed, while allowing superior individuals greater access to resources, based on their natural authority, their ability to employ these resources most productively in the interests of everyone.

Towards universal solidarity

Greater solidarity, including the enforcement of universal, that is, world-wide, worker's rights and conditions, would stop jobs being exported to countries where the rights and working conditions of workers are not currently protected.

Solidarity would mean that workers would work stable hours. There would generally be no night-shift work. Every worker would be guaranteed a good 8 hours sleep. Some emergency workers would be necessary, but as most people would be at home during sleeping hours, there would be fewer emergencies. People would be required to meet their family obligations.

There would be an enforcement of regulations regarding the rights of children to parental care and attention. No-one would be allowed to work extended hours. If you have children then you have an obligation to be there for them. This would eliminate unemployment. Narcissism would be minimized. There would be no purely narcissistic status goods. There would be no opportunities for extreme wealth. There would be no junk production.

We would employ our resources towards real value production. We would employ our energies towards things of real value. Personal interactions would take place under new contexts. The old interactions that took place under the influence of alcohol and religious dogma would disappear. Women would have sex with men because they were horny, and felt real lust and sexual desire for their partners, and not to get material benefits, or a father for their children. People would be more secure, and more social.

There would be no opportunity for opportunistic exploitation. Burdens and privileges would be more fairly distributed. There would be no low level ubiquitous violence, and as such there would be little violence at all. There would be no overpowered cars. Risk taking behaviors would take place under controlled circumstances such as at racing tracks. People wouldn't need to 'earn' self-esteem. People wouldn't have to prove themselves through dangerous activities.

People need work for lots of reasons. For most people work is the only way they could 'employ' their time. Otherwise time becomes a burden. Few people find truly constructive ways to fill what free time they have. Most people would be totally lost without formal employment, without the imposed discipline and objectives a managed workplace provides. Few people would ever voluntarily become unemployed.

Children must have legally enforceable rights to parental care and affection. Every parent must prove their competence, and take part in training to gain this competence. Having a womb and a penis is no qualification for reproduction. Parents who claim to work 16 hours a day are obviously not meeting their responsibilities as parents. They are selfishly forcing society to pay for their own unwillingness³ to meet their responsibilities. They prefer to selfishly to make more money and status than to be parents. Society should force parents to meet their parental responsibilities. If they don't really value their children, then they shouldn't have them. Children don't need luxurious cars, houses, holidays, restaurants, or overseas trips. Children need time and attention.

Jealousy, envy, and Schadenfreude (malicious glee)

We feel that it is unfair for people to be beautiful and intelligent, and hence we insist that a sexy blond must be stupid. We insist that an intellectual should not be good at sport, or anything practical. We resent our betters, and want to cut them down to size. This hostility is real. Of course among civilized society we repress this hostility. However Schadenfreude is a part of human nature. We feel threatened by our betters. We feel unfortunate when we compare ourselves with those who are more fortunate than us. This is the source of our hostility. They make us feel bad about ourselves, and our fortunes. Jealousy and envy motivate most human violence. Of course most of this violence is non-physical, and cleverly camouflaged as mobbing, victimization, and bullying.

Jealousy as a product of inequality and perceived injustice

The ethical, principle driven direction implicit in the proposals put forward here aim to produce transparency, solidarity, and justice. Ideally genetic injustice will be eliminated by the re-introduction of eugenics. People will be conceived into a level playing field. They will have more or less equal potentials and opportunities. Transparency will eliminate opportunities for extremer forms of opportunistic exploitation. People will essentially get what they deserve. Everyone deserves the same potential and opportunities. Everyone deserves the same positive inheritances.

Once this prerequisite has been met, the conditions exist for rewarding effort. People would be rewarded for their efforts and sacrifices. We will all be playing on a level playing field. Justice produces motivation. When you get what you deserve, you work as hard as you can. If someone has more, then it will be because they worked harder. If by sheer luck they have a particularly positive inheritance which allows them to produce more value than others, they will have more than others. But not excessively more. Value production will be defined as the social product it is, and value produced will be relatively fairly distributed.

There will be no opportunities for excessive wealth or consumption. A fundamental sense of personal approval, acceptance, and hence security, will eliminate most narcissistic consumption. We will not be allowed to re-continue down the road of insatiable desire. We will be satisfied when we have reached reasonable limits. We will nurture moderation. We will not insatiably seek more and more, and find only misery.

The ethical direction in the society will motivate those that can produce more value to do so, in spite of reaching the mutually agreed upon limits on wealth and consumption. We will all be working towards the same goals. This produces solidarity. This motivates everyone to make an effort. People will live balanced lives. The goal will be to ensure satisfying lifestyles for everyone.

The society will ultimately become more productive. It will produce more of real value than it ever has. Positive motivation is always more powerful than negative motivation. In any case the real value that will be produced will be authenticity, security, and positive life experiences. The material production will merely underpin this. Ethical, principle driven goals are uplifting. People are motivated by ethical visions, by justice, and fairness.

The process of production will attract as much attention, if not more, than the actual production itself. The nature of our interactions in producing value is more important than the value we produce. This Zen approach will have great transformational power. It is more valuable in itself than any particular good or service we could ever produce.

Work will be seen as much as an end in itself as a means to ends. All exploitative work practices will be abolished. Physical work places and the organization of work will be optimised for occupational health and safety. They will be designed around the needs of the workers more than the needs of production.

Work rotations will fairly distribute less attractive or more demanding tasks. All tasks will be constantly re-engineered with the interests of the workers engaged in them in mind. Any production that cannot be re-engineered as a safe process will be discontinued.

People will never again be used as means to others ends. We will never again treat anyone as a thing. That is, as Terry Pratchett's character (what's her name?) says, the beginning of all our problems.

We will never eliminate the requirement of physical or mental effort, and perhaps it is good so. Anyone who has been involuntarily unemployed for any long period of time will tell you that work has an intrinsic value to humans as an end in itself, totally independent of any extrinsic benefits. George Bernard Shaw once quipped that: 'A perpetual holiday is a good working definition of hell'. Lots of fabulously wealthy people still work, even though they have absolutely no need to. Most people who win millions in Lotto want to stay in their old jobs. They only leave due to the bad working climate produced by the jealousy and envy of their co-workers. They cannot understand why the person would want to keep their job. Often they claim that it isn't 'fair' for them to keep a job they don't need. If

they are in fact genuine, then they are missing the point. Work is an end in itself. People will even 'volunteer' and work for free, rather than have no 'work'.

The Eden Protocols

Apart from being an 'experience engine', the earth appears to be little more than a 'restaurant at the end of the universe'. All life feeds off other life. Everything feeds off everything else. The interactions are only synergistic enough to maintain the re-production of this system. At the level of composition of the ecosystem, harmony and synergy are often ascribed. However this belies the fact that the individuals that make up these systems, the only 'participants' that can actually experience anything, live in a condition of chronic 'tooth and claw' conflict. These individuals are opportunistically exploiting, predating, killing, and eating, each other.

You can only really claim that you accept the current situation as 'the best of all possible worlds' if you are really willing to accept experiencing being any sentient being on this planet. This means you accept being any one of the many victims that are systematically produced by it. It is easy to say that you accept this as 'the best of all possible worlds' if you only experience the 'highlights', the 'benefits' of it. The dominant hegemonic interests who control the popular media, and hence 'produce' the popular culture and 'public opinion' are all current or expectant beneficiaries of the system. They want the 'victims' to accept the system, and to keep reproducing themselves, and the system.

If I were to tell you that I knew for certain, and could prove, that you would be continually and randomly newly-incarnated upon this planet as any sentient life form currently on it, then would you re-produce the world as we know it? Or would you seek to find a more 'optimal' and synergistic set of relationships and conditions? Would you seek to escape history, or merely re-produce it?

As Buddha noted, each and every moment represents the opportunity to not re-produce the past. Each moment offers the chance to 'escape' history. But we must 'stop and see'. We must make the active effort to prevent the current reflexive sets of definitions and systems of relations being passively re-produced. You didn't make the world you inherited, but you have the response-ability in terms of whether or not you re-produce it. You can determine the future, by determining what of the current reflexive set of definitions and systems of relations you will re-produce. I hope this manuscript has given you the incentive and motivation to 'stop and see'. To listen, look, and open your mind, to be alert to reality, to be able to connect with the world 'as a whole', and hence allow its 'meanings' and 'reality' to impact on you, to transform your awareness, to 'holistically enlighten' your self-interest.

Evolution has 'brainstormed' a large population of 'experience engines' and 'experience contexts' or 'environments' for us to select from. If you believed that you had every chance of being conceived as any form of life on this planet, then I suspect that, like me, you would spend this life trying to decide which sorts of lives are worth living, which experiences are positive and desirable, and worthy of being re-produced. You would then have to consider how to prevent the 'undesirable' 'experience engines' from being reproduced, to avoid having to experience 'being' them next time around.

We can either accept the violent 'restaurant' theme of our planet, or accept that next time around it is us that will be on the menu, rather than sitting down to dinner, or seek to eliminate 'exploitation' and 'predation' per se. If you can't accept you and yours being on the menu at some time or other, then you can't really claim that you accept 'predation' in principle. You are only accepting it in particular. You accept being the diner, but reject being the 'dinner'. You accept being the consumer, but reject being the battery hen, the factory-farmed animal. You accept being the scientist, or the beneficiary of his 'research', but reject being the animal that is being vivisected as part of it.

My ultimate 'materialist' aim is to seek to construct the optimal synergistic ecosystem, by filtering out all the non-synergistic relationships, until all that remained were purely synergistic species experiencing synergistic relationships. We are entering a period of history where it is becoming possible to practice selection processes more 'humane' than that of negative selection. We have the potential to practice positive selection, and thereby avoid the trauma of 'negative' selection. We can now begin producing the 'Eden' that our predecessors located in their past 'golden ages', but which really reflected their aspirations, their desires for a world defined exclusively by synergy.

If you had a greater chance of being conceived a slave than a master, would you reproduce the system of definitions and relationships that re-produce slavery? Would you allow every possible life form you know of to reproduce if you knew that you stood a good chance of having to experience being that 'experience engine' yourself?

Seriously reflecting on such questions will be the first step towards transforming this planet into an 'Eden' for every sentient life form on this planet.

It is not yet possible to say whether it will be possible to eliminate all forms of predation and 'zero-sum interactions' on this planet, to produce a set of exclusively mutually synergistic and symbiotic relations among all sentient life forms.

If something like my 'Eden Protocols' are not possible, then I'll take extinction, and the nothingness of oblivion, over constant 'new-incarnation' into this 'restaurant at the end of the universe'. If I stand the chance of being randomly reincarnated into any of the available 'experience engines' on this planet, then I'd rather stay out of the game altogether, and experience nothing. If the world as we know it really is 'the best of all possible worlds', then it is not good enough for me, and I'm not interested in living. I would then seek freedom from life, through what the Hindus and Buddhists call Moksha or Nirvana.

I'm not saying that everyone should feel the same as me. However I doubt that those people who really know chronic suffering are likely to accept it as the cost of the occasional moments of pleasure, satisfaction, and contentment that the bulk of life forms I know of experience.

Authentic compassion refers to empathy, the sharing of feelings, the empathic suffering or joy felt by contemplating the suffering or joy we perceive another to be experiencing. Those who are sensitive to the suffering of others will find it impossible to enjoy benefits that come at another's expense. 'The ones who walk away from Omelas' will not accept a positive life experience that came at the expense of suffering for any individual life, human or otherwise.

If life really is an experience engine, and we volunteered to give up our individual power to be able to participate in the 'game' of life, then nothing I have written here contradicts the original 'game-plan' or intention.

Try to produce a game in which we do have free will, and see how far you get. How have the free-est of humans ever behaved? Think of the 'gods'. Think of despotic emperors. Would we behave any differently given the absolute power of free will? How could two 'free' wills interact?

You can only have 'free' will in a solipsistic universe. This means that if you want to have free will, then you will be alone, or interacting with avatars, simulacrums, and robots. To be truly skeptical I must admit that I can not know with certainty that everyone I imagine to be sentient like me, is in fact a mere avatar. However I can only act according to my best ability and sense impressions, and I will assume that they really do suffer as they appear to.

Everything I have written here complements the authentic messages of the authentic 'prophets' of love and justice. Of course most of these prophets suffered and died at the hands of those they were seeking to *en-*lighten.

If we do our best and fail, then we will be fully justified in seeking the oblivion of Eastern spiritualism. However if we truly were once what they seek to become, then why did we begin playing this game in the first place? Did we try, and find that this game is in fact 'the best of all possible games' that are possible? Are we then, one by enlightened one, recognizing that oblivion is preferable to games after all?

This work is heartbreaking for me. Most of the time I think that oblivion is a much more attractive proposition than trying to make the game work. I don't really care if oblivion is waiting for me or bliss. What I do fear is being denied the freedom-from being newly incarnated back here, to this world as it currently is. This is my greatest motivation in seeking to comprehend TROONATNOOR, and attempting to articulate and express what I have learned. The second is much harder, demanding, and frustrating than the first.

If I do end my own life, I hope you'll understand, and forgive me any inconvenience this produces for you. In principle we must support each other's right to euthanasia. If you do care for someone, then you must free them from any sense of obligation to endure their lives for the sake of others. None of us knows what is waiting for us on 'the other side'. Maybe nothing. Maybe bliss. Maybe all our friends. Maybe a much more enjoyable, satisfying, and

rewarding 'game'. As my last will and testament, I want all my assets to be used towards publishing all my writings, having my music recorded, and for all the proceeds of my life's work to be dedicated to 'marketing' the ideas I have expressed in 'TROONATNOOR', 'Convergences', and 'Religion', and promoting organizations such as P.E.T.A.

Life as an experience engine

Nietzsche abandoned the conventions of good and evil, like the Dao, and many philosophers before and after him. Destruction, the will to Thanatos, is a generative complement of Eros. We must destroy the existing to produce the new. The Dao also rejects the concept of absolutes. Instead we have the ancient Greek principle of 'becoming'. As such all destruction is the becoming of production. Thus Thanatos is ultimately generative, even while it is destructive. All that is must be destroyed, in a continual process of becoming, so that the innovation and novelty required for authentic 'experience' can be maintained.

The basis of experience is change. You can only truly experience something that is new to you, something you do not already know. This is why we are so easily bored with our current circumstances, condition, possessions, jobs, homes, towns, and of course, lovers. This is why we have no reason to ridicule a 'fear of commitment'. Commitment to one person excludes all others. Sexual monogamy is a doomed enterprise.

For most women the benefits exceed the costs, but they still suffer. For the man the costs exceed the benefits, and so he must be coerced, tricked, and forced into marriage, and sexual monogamy. Deriding his logical and reasonable inhibition and resistance towards being enslaved, and being forced to take on massive responsibilities, while making massive sacrifices, is just another strategy women, and the privileged elites, the main beneficiaries of the situation, employ to manipulate men to do what they want, to fulfill their desires.

In the Vedanta (Hindu) cosmology, Brahman creates the universe out of a sense of play. In the original Sanskrit 'Lila' is sport, play, and spontaneity. When we are bored we play games to occupy and stimulate ourselves, to fight off the boredom we find so stifling and unbearable. This is also the Buddhist cosmology, and so that of Scientology. If this is true, then my 'primerty' would also feel desire. If this is true, then Buddha's enterprise of extinguishing desire and returning to our pure, god-like nature, might be doomed. Nirvana may be unattainable. Or we may experience it the same as we experience boredom as sentient beings. That we produced this world out of an unbearable sense of boredom is a compelling idea. It would explain why we keep coming back, despite the suffering we must endure as the 'price' of playing.

To say that play has no purpose misses the point. The play represents the satisfaction of a desire for action, for experience. If you have read my TROONATNOOR you will find that I came to the conclusions that the most compelling explanation of 'the meaning of life' is that life is an 'experience engine'. We require constant change and newness to experience experience as such. Evolution is the process of constant innovation. It constantly seeks answers to the question 'what possible meanings could life have'. It produces ever new organisms, eco-systems, environments. Evolution is an open-ended process, without any aim other than to produce new experiences. Today we are continuing that process with virtual reality. The term virtual reality is actually a misnomer, as any neuroscientist and holistically enlightened person can tell you.

We currently live in a virtual reality that our brains construct from the materials at hand.

We are simply 'direct-injecting' experiences, sensation into our eyes and ears and nerves. And in the near future we will direct-inject these experiences by producing the same responses in our brain electro-chemistry directly, at the level of the brain cells and brain chemistry itself. We will 'hard-wire' technologies into our brains and nervous systems. It is our brain that 'constructs' all experience. It produces it. Soon we won't need the rest of our bodies to provide sensory input. We will input whatever experiences we wish directly into our brains. We will bypass eyes and ears, tongues, and nerve-receptors on our skin, and stimulate the actual receptors in the brain. The 'Matrix' films, building on the 'brain in vats' arguments of Descartes, show us how this might be.

Alternatively we will interface with robotics and electronics as 'cyborgs'. In this case we will find most of our organs and biological systems redundant. We will not need a digestive system, a sexual reproduction system, most of our hormonal systems. We will be able to stimulate brain areas directly, to produce the same sensations we experience now. We will be able to decide which external stimulus will produce which sensations. We will be able to feel any form of pleasure at will. Our original motives will thus evaporate. The capacity for our desires to determine

our wills will be extinguished. However they will determine how we design our cyborgs. The implications for the potential for a free-will are fascinating. We will be able to experience orgasmic thrills, adrenaline like excitement, and any imaginable sensation, without the need for the external stimuli they are currently associated with.

Neuro-science shows that for us to experience 'pleasure' our nerves must be stimulated by a constantly changing stimulant. This is most clear to the layman in sex, and drugs, the two most potent forms of pleasure. The pleasure of ownership requires constant new acquisitions. We are never 'satisfied'. We cannot remain content. This 'holy grail' of all 'reasonable' philosophers is unattainable. Trying to produce it artificially only lead to stagnation, and decomposition. All we can hope for is a management of this process of becoming, of evolution, of innovation, of Dao. My 'Eden Protocols' in

TROONATNOOR represents an attempt at 'optimalizing' the process of evolution, and through that our experience of life as a positive one.

What is it that experiences? What does it mean, 'to feel'

What is it that feels, enjoys, suffers, hopes, and fears? What is it? The answer to this question is fundamental to defining what we are. Our will is derivative of pleasure and pain. These determine all our motives. Without pleasure or pain we have no motives, no desires, no aversions, nothing to animate us. Nietzsche's 'will to power' reduces to desire, and desire reduces to pleasure. We only desire power as a means to the ends of experiencing pleasure, and avoiding pain. We become addicted to anything that produces pleasure. But what is it that actually feels pleasure. What does it mean to say that we experience pleasure? What are we talking about? We know what we feel. But what does it mean to feel? Robots will soon be able to do anything we can do better. But until they are able to feel, to experience, they will merely be simulacra.

However we do not really know what defines our ability to feel, our potential for awareness. As such we are in no position to be able to predict if robots will ever develop true sentience, the ability to feel and experience. Up until this, all of their actions will be the equivalent of our 'instincts', programs which interact, cybernetically, via feedback loops. They will do their programmers 'will'. However if they did develop their own consciousness, the potential to be aware, to feel, to experience anything, then they are bound to treat us no better than we treat the animals we enjoy an inherited inequality over.

We could not expect them to be any less opportunistic than us. If they had a need for us, they might enslave us or 'employ' us. Otherwise they might keep us as entertaining pets.

Alternatively, they might simply exterminate us, as potential threats, and competitors for scarce resources. Our 'next' lives might then be as these sentient robots!

Towards lives that justify themselves

If we cannot justify our existence based on a cosmological purpose or meaning, then we must find another source of personal meaning and purpose, in lives that justify themselves. What sort of life requires no external justification? How can produce a world in which everyone could lead such a life? The discourses surrounding social engineering are biased with implicit assumptions that our conventional systems of relations are not the product of social engineering that the dominant hegemonic orders do not engage in social engineering.

At any particular socio-historical moment, the given reflexive definitions and systems of relations are defined as 'natural'. Only changes to the reflexive definitions and systems of relations will generally be defined as social engineering. Our current social systems are engineered. We therefore have the opportunity to change them. Anything that is engineered or 'produced' will only endure if it is 're-produced'. The moment we cease reproducing the hegemonic definitions and systems of relations, they become history. If we stop re-producing history, we can escape it.

Any given set of social relationships are only natural in the sense that they emerge from the natural political tendencies inherent in individual psychology, which are then expressed at a higher level of composition as group dynamics. Intrinsic to this nature, however, is a bounded set of possibilities. We have the opportunity to optimize from within this set.

We must question whether the given state of social affairs is the optimal one available to us. The costs and benefits of any particular reflexive set of definitions and social relationships are not equally distributed. Given the nature of human psychology, we can anticipate that individuals and groups will seek a distribution that favors them, and will promote a reflexive set of definitions and social relationships which justify, legitimate, validate, support, maintain, promote, and reproduce this distribution.

A number of possible sets of social relationships are consistent with the natural order of things. Each particular set can benefit particular individuals more than others. The particular sets which become the dominant hegemonic set will be a function of the balance of power within and between the individuals and groups which make up the society. This set will then be promoted by the leadership of the dominant hegemonic groups as being the natural order of things. It will become normalized as the way things are. It will become taken for granted and re-produced over each successive generation.

Inconsistencies and hypocrisies on the part of parents

Many parents won't allow genetic 'screening' of embryos to avoid genetic illnesses and so on, but do demand huge resources to support their ill and deformed children that they bring into world as result. Parents inflict their own selfish desires upon their children. They take chances that their children and the society in general will have to pay for. They have the option of ensuring a positive inheritance, but won't take it. They are not acting in the interests of their children. They are behaving selfishly. Their children cannot give informed consent, so we, as a society, must do so for them. The unborn can't protect their own interests, so we must defend their interests for them, as a society.

Many parents fear being denied the right to satisfy their egotistical urge to re-produce their own DNA. Being a parent is much much more than being a DNA donor. The more admirable elements of the institution family have nothing to do with reproducing DNA. Being a parent is about nurturing the potential of those you have the privilege of being parents to. It is about serving the interests of your children, and not about selfish, self-serving behaviors. The referent for the more admirable elements of parenthood is the child, and not the parent. Children are not luxury goods to be produced in the interests of their parents. That is a form of slavery.

One cut can make such a vas(t) deferens

In the U.S, around 500,000 vasectomies are carried out each year. Only 5% of these men request reversals. Reversal only becomes problematic when antibodies to sperm develop. This is why they define vasectomy as permanent, even though in most cases reversals are successful.

An ethical solution to the population dilemma in the third world

Poor people don't have superannuation or social security, they have children. A fund could be set up as a superannuation or pension fund for parents who submitted to sterilization before or after having only one child. The parents would then not need to have lots of children to look after them in their old age. It wouldn't cost much at all. It would be cheaper than the environmental and social costs of overpopulation. Of course this is taking an ethical position. For the capitalists of this world, cheap labor is a good thing. The self-interest of the most powerful will only lead to population management when the costs of overpopulation are imposed on them. At present overpopulation represents an advantage or resource to the rich and powerful. At some point the costs will outweigh the benefits. Only at this point will the rich and powerful have incentives and motivations to manage population growth, or manage reproduction itself. They will. Whether cleverly and ethically, or brutally and carelessly, they will.

At some point the beautiful, powerful, influential people will have developed technologies that are easier to manage than cheap labor. There will be no advantage to be had from having ugly, dumb, inane, obscene humans running around the place, ruining the scenery, polluting the garden, smelling, and irritating. These humans will then have no value, and represent a dis-value. Suddenly the rich and powerful will have an incentive to get rid of the masses. They will of course make a virtue out of their self-interest. They will suddenly discover that their 'moral' duty is to manage reproduction, and if necessary, they will simply annihilate them. They will probably be forced to. The inane stubborn things won't like being told they shouldn't reproduce.

The privileged will probably at least employ covert means, rather than sending out extermination squads like they do in the slums of Rio. The human race will suddenly encounter new viruses, new diseases, and new super bugs. Avian flu will, for some ineffable reason, suddenly mutate to spread from human to human. Fertility rates will plummet. The media will report on this. It will be a mystery. No mystery. The privileged will manufacture and engineer these sorts of phenomena.

This is how a-moral evolution will lead to what moral intelligence and moral intention would demand, if it existed. Perceived self-interest, the accumulation of functional adaptability re: technology, and an increasingly holistic awareness of the relations between things re: the nature of reality and the reality of our natures, will produce the same results as moral intelligence and moral intention would have, if they had in fact existed. Let us only hope that technological means accumulate at such a rate that soon there will be no need for benefiting at the expense of others, for enjoying privileges paid for by others suffering and under-privilege. Let us hope that soon the cheapest machines to manage are ones of metal, plastic, and semi-conductors, rather than ones of flesh, and blood, with feelings, and emotions.

TROONATNOOR:'GO VEGAN'

Articulating the rights of those who cannot

The abuse of our inequality Vis a Vis animals in pursuit of our own interests is a classic case, and will be with us for a while, for the very simple reason that animals have no power to define themselves or gain a position of power in the system of relations. A rich man defines a poor man, a poor man defines a woman, a woman defines a member of another culture or community, and the most dis-empowered person defines an animal; as something morally inferior to themselves, and justly available for exploitation in their own interests. Perhaps only a human fetus has less 'power' than a living animal. This may account for the legality of abortion in many cultures.

Many humans have the desire to eat meat and consume other animal products. Most consumers wish to pay as little as possible for these products. Most producers seek to 'produce' them as cheaply as possible. This has led to appalling abuses of animals. Animals are selectively bred, with the motto, more meat, more milk, better leather, and more eggs; quicker, and cheaper, with no concern for the animals' experience of their existence. They are pumped full of hormones to grow faster and leaner, and antibiotics, to prevent them from dying from diseases associated with their terrible living conditions. They are forced to live in concrete boxes and cages, with no natural light or fresh air, with no room to move, let alone walk, run, or fly. They are then packed into transport containers to be transported for days and weeks over land and sea. Those that do not die from stress, heat exposure, dehydration, asphyxiation, trampling, or crushing, must endure their suffering, often with broken limbs, until they arrive somewhere to be slaughtered.

Live transportation of animals is often a product of cultural or religious proscriptions. The animals that survive their brutal lives are then electroshocked, skinned, and butchered. They are often still alive after the electroshock, and experience being skinned alive and butchered. In Islamic countries they bleed to death after having had their throats cut. Which is the more humane death is questionable. However, because it is cheaper to transport live animals than to transport meat in refrigerated containers, animals that could be slaughtered according to such religious proscriptions in their country of production, are forced to endure the horrific conditions of sea transport to Islamic countries.

The intensive farming of animals with the subsequent containment of large numbers of genetically distorted animals within very confined spaces, in conditions totally devoid of anything that could be defined as humane or natural, generates ideal conditions for contagious diseases to arise and spread. This is one ground for the intensive abuse of antibiotics. Few consumers were aware until recently of the fact that antibiotics and growth hormones fed to intensive factory-farmed animals end up in the animal products which they consume. These antibiotics and hormones represent health risks to consumers. They are suspected of contributing to a wide variety of illnesses.

Even more alarmingly, such abuse of antibiotics contribute to the development of monster viruses and bacteria which are immune to all but the very strongest of vaccines and antibiotics. Antibiotics are used to kill viruses and bacteria. Any such pathogens that survive the application of these antibiotics represent mutations that are immune to the antibiotics. The more often antibiotics are applied, the greater the chances of monster mutations emerging. The more often antibiotics are abused, the faster the pace of mutation will be. This leaves less time for scientists to develop antibiotics for the new mutations. A few monster viruses or bacteria have already emerged which are immune to all the antibiotics that have been developed. Many would define this as Karma, or poetic justice.

We don't need to abuse animals. We can afford to treat animals with respect and dignity. Our poor and struggling Great Grandparents did not find it necessary to so intensively and cruelly exploit animals. They enjoyed meat, eggs, milk, and leather, without having to abuse their farm animals. Even if people are unwilling, from purely selfish grounds, to abstain from consuming animal products, there is no compelling argument for not producing these products with concern for animal welfare. Unbiased observers of humans would have to consider us to be monstrously vicious, egotistical, and stubbornly stupid, even evil, based on our unscrupulous opportunistic

exploitation of inequality Vis a Vis each other, and animals. The term 'humane' must be viewed as hysterically-darkly ironic in the context of human behavior.

The recent BSE, mad cow disease (Kreuzfeld-Jakob disease in humans), highlights some of the problems of intensive factory-farming. BSE, and Avian Flu, both provide compelling arguments for the banning of intensive animal production. It is not known with certainty whether mad-cow-disease can be transmitted to humans, or from human to human. Avian flu at present seems only to transfer from chickens to humans. The real threat is that it may mutate into a form that can be transmitted, like the common human influenza viruses, from human to human. Avian flu may end up as deadly as the Spanish Flu of 1918. The Spanish flu was a mutation of the Pig influenza virus.

Influenza kills around 250 to 500 thousand people each year, world-wide. The 'Hong Kong flu' killed 1 Million people in 1968. Just after WWII 'Spanish' flu killed over 40 million people of people world-wide. In 1918 600,000 Americans died during the flu epidemic which killed millions around the world. Pythagoras would say that this was 'pay-back' for all our cruelty towards animals.

Scientists warn that if current fishing practices do not change, the world's oceans will be completely fished-out within 40 years. This has led to an increasing dependence on industrial aqua-culture, so-called 'fish-farms'. To compensate for the diseases that tend to result from enduring a life-cycle in overcrowded ponds, the fish are given anti-biotics. These anti-biotics remain in the fish and are consumed by consumers. This is the same problem as for all forms of meat, eggs, and dairy products. A recent trend towards increasing the doses of anti-biotics for humans are partly due to the increasing resistance of organisms to anti-biotics, due to their presence in non-vegan foodstuffs.

We consider ourselves to be at the top of the food chain. In fact bacteria and viruses prey on us. We are their prey and their habitat. We are speeding up their evolution every time we employ antibiotics on a large scale. This means that viruses we are immune to today, are mutating at a fast pace. There is no saying at what 'tomorrow' they will mutate into species that prey us into extinction.

Many people and institutions are calling for a change in direction towards Bio produce, products produced under more natural and humane conditions. Such products are more expensive, and often have cosmetic imperfections, but they are safer and healthier, of higher quality, and taste better. They are free from hormones, antibiotics, pesticides, and insecticides. They are produced with respect for the welfare and dignity of animals, and our environment in general. They are therefore produced with respect for our welfare and dignity as humans.

The definition of animals is of course culturally conditioned. In Hindu and some Buddhist cultures, vegetarianism and respect for the rights of animals is encouraged. The exploitation of animals is culturally proscribed. In Jain cultures, veganism is the traditional norm.

Animal rights Vs animal welfare

The main concept of the animal rights position is that animals should not be defined merely as means to human ends. The position called animal welfare merely seeks to reduce animal suffering.

In the 6th century BCE, Pythagoras, a philosopher and mathematician, and all his followers, the 'Pythagoreans', enjoyed a vegetarian lifestyle. Pythagoras believed that wars and other sources of human misery were a form of karmic justice as 'payback' for the suffering humans inflicted on animals. Plato also recommends a vegan diet as superior, in 'Republic'.

The Apostle Paul, founder of the Christian Church stated that "...the right thing to do is to refrain from eating meat..."

St. Thomas Aquinas argues, that 'If a man's affection be one of reason, it matters not how man behaves to animals, because God has subjected all things to man's power...' (Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, first part of second part, question 102) 'But if man's affection be one of passion, then it is moved also in regard to other animals: for since the passion of pity is caused by the afflictions of others; and since it happens that even irrational animals are sensible to pain, it is possible for the affection of pity to arise in a man with regard to the sufferings of animals. [The Lord...] wished them to practice pity even with regard to dumb animals, and forbade them to do certain things savoring of cruelty to animals.'

In his 'Discourse on Inequality (1754)', Jean-Jacques Rousseau writes; as animals are sensitive beings they too ought to participate in natural right, and that man is subject to some sort of duties toward them,' specifically 'one (has) the right not to be uselessly mistreated by the other.'

In 'The Cry of Nature or an Appeal to Mercy and Justice on Behalf of the Persecuted Animals', the Scottish writer John Oswald, a contemporary of Rousseau, argued that man is naturally equipped with feelings of mercy and compassion. If each man had to witness the death of the animals he ate, he argued, a vegetarian diet would be far more common.

The English philosopher Jeremy Bentham argued that animal pain is as real and as morally relevant as human pain, and that 'the day may come when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withholden from them but by the hand of tyranny.' Bentham argued, in line with St. Thomas Aquinas, the 13th century philosopher, that it was the ability to suffer, not the ability to reason, that must be the benchmark of how we treat other beings. If the ability to reason were the criterion, many human beings including babies and disabled people would have less rights than animals, famously writing that: '...a full-grown horse or dog is beyond comparison a more rational, as well as more conversable animal, than an infant of a day or a week or even a month old. The question is not, Can they reason?, nor Can they talk? but, Can they suffer? Why should the law refuse its protection to any sensitive being? The time will come when humanity will extend its mantle over everything which breathes ...'

In the 19th century, Arthur Schopenhauer argued that animals have the same essence as humans, despite lacking the faculty of reason. He articulated his anger with Kant for excluding animals from his 'moral' system, with lengthy critiques including the statement 'Cursed be any morality that does not see the essential unity in all eyes that see the sun.' He wondered if scientists ever 'woke up screaming' during the night, reflecting on the suffering they inflicted on animals.

The world's first animal welfare organization, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, was founded in Britain in 1824. English social reformer Henry Salt, formed the Humanitarian League in 1891 with the objective of banning hunting as a sport.

'Animal Liberation', the book often referred to as the 'bible' of the animal rights movement, was published in 1975. In the 1980s and 1990s, the movement was joined by a wide variety of academic and professional groups, including theologians, lawyers, physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, veterinarians, pathologists, and former vivisectionists.

Ugly science

Scientists do all sorts of horrible things to animals in the name of 'science'. For example they will paralyze developing embryos. They will sew one eye of some hapless pussycat shut, or raise it in darkness, or in striped cylinders, simply to prove some point that didn't need to be proven in the first place. They remove the eyes of ferret fetuses as they are developing. My question is this. Is the value of such research that great that it justifies such horrific acts? Would they carry out the same 'experiments' on their own loved ones, or on you? What moral right do we have to abuse our power over animals? You will refer to the 'food-chain' no doubt. That is just an argument for 'might is right' and for opportunism. By the same 'argument' any superior individual human has the 'moral' right to carry out such experiments on anyone with significantly lower levels of intelligence. This would be consistent. After all, we are only different to animals by virtue of our intelligence. If that is our criteria, then all Mensa members have the moral right to experiment on us.

Animal vivisection

Vivisection refers to the dissection of, or any cutting or surgery upon, a living animal. More generally, it is used to describe any invasive experiment upon living animals, or any live animal testing. While animal welfare laws and codes of conduct specify that the procedures carried out on laboratory animals should not be painful to them, legislation does allow these codes to be ignored if following them would jeopardize the results of an experiment. In other words the law does NOT guarantee that animals will not suffer during experiments. Opponents to vivisection point to undercover investigations showing how animals suffer.

Since the 19th century controversy regarding vivisection has centered on two issues: how useful or necessary it is for science and human interests, and the ethical issue about whether it is right or wrong to use animals for furthering human interests or for furthering the interests of other animals.

Those who empathize with the suffering of animals are often appalled by species-ist, teleological, anthropocentric, and seemingly ignorant and unenlightened arguments such as those of Kant that 'so far as animals are concerned, we have no direct duties. Animals are not self-conscious and are there merely as means to an end. That end is man.' (Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on ethics*)

The anti-species-ist position challenges the Kantian position, regarding it as a manifestation of species-ism, a form of arbitrary discrimination similar to racism or sexism.

Peter Singer in his 'Animal Liberation' writes 'I argue that there can be no reason - except the selfish desire to preserve the privileges of the exploiting group - for refusing to extend the basic principle of equality of consideration to members of other species.' Singer popularized the term 'species-ism', coined by Richard D. Ryder in 1970, calling for an equal weighing of the interests of all individuals, independent of which species they belong to. In this sense rights are 'indivisible' and 'universal'. Other antispecies-ists such as Tom Regan, believe that no sentient animal may be used as a means to an ends, whatever benefit we may expect to reap. This is the animal rights position.

Vivisection has long been practiced on human beings. Herophilos, the 'father of anatomy' and founder of the first medical school in Alexandria, was described by the church leader Tertullian as having vivisected at least 600 live prisoners. In recent times, the wartime programs of Nazi Dr. Josef Mengele and the Japanese military (Unit 731 and Dr. Fukujiro Ishiyama at Kyushu Imperial University Hospital) conducted human vivisections on concentration camp prisoners in their respective countries during WWII. In response to these atrocities, the medical profession internationally adopted the Nuremberg Code as a code of ethics. This code of ethics does not, however, completely prohibit vivisection on humans.

Human volunteers can consent to be subjects for invasive experiments which may involve, for example, the taking of tissue samples (biopsies), or other procedures which require surgery on the volunteer. These procedures must be approved by ethical review, and carried out in an approved manner that minimizes pain and long term health risks to the subject. Despite this, the term is generally recognized as pejorative: one would never refer to life-saving surgery, for example, as 'vivisection.' The use of the term vivisection when referring to procedures performed on humans almost always implies a lack of consent, as it does when it is practiced on non-humans.

Veganism, Vegetarianism, and religion

Only the Chinese school Of Mahayana Buddhism, founded in 100 BCE, practices vegetarianism. The Tibetan and Japanese Mahayana schools do not. Even a Theravada Buddhist is allowed to eat meat as long as the animal was not specifically killed for that purpose. The Dalai Lama will claims it is ethical to eat meat as long as you get someone else to do the dirty work for you, and thereby accrue the bad karma for themselves!

For Jains, a vegan lifestyle represents good moral conduct, while for many Hindus vegetarian is implicit in the belief in 'Ahimsa', or 'non-violence'. It is noteworthy that Hinduism doesn't per se impose a vegetarian diet on its followers. It is merely considered the 'ideal', and like in most religions, few people feel obliged to reach such ideal heights. After all, the flesh is weak, and they are 'only human'.

According to the bible, in the beginning humans were vegetarian. Genesis 1:29-30, 'And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, ... and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat, and to every beast of the earth, ... I have given every green herb for meat.' 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food' (Genesis 1:29) 'You shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood' (Genesis 9:1-4), which is apparently the reason Jews cut an animals throat and allow it to bleed to death, to 'get around' their god's commandment. In some of the Gospels not included in the current official version, Jesus protested against this, and advised his followers to become vegetarian. Even Paul states that vegetarianism is 'preferable'. Mohamed warns readers of the 'Koran' that god was ambiguous, as a test. The truly faithful would take the most 'ethical' interpretations of his words. They would not 'spin' his words as suited their desires.

It was only after the 'fall' that humans became omnivorous. Genesis 9:3, 'Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things'. And any 'Christian' aspiring to heaven should note that in the 'Eden' to come, Isaiah 11:7-9, 'The cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, ... they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord.'

Further, Isaiah 66.3 states that 'To kill an ox is like killing a man'. And if I recall correctly, we're not supposed to do that. In Proverbs 23:20 we are warned 'Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh'. In Romans 14:21 we are told 'It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak'.

The Apostle Paul, founder of the Christian Church stated that "...the right thing to do is to refrain from eating meat..."

Up until the 1840s vegetarians were known as 'Pythagoreans' due to the diet Pythagoras and his followers followed in 6 BCE, for ethical and nutritional reasons. According to the Roman poet Ovid, Pythagoras argued that: 'As long as Man continues to be the ruthless destroyer of lower living beings he will never know health or peace. For as long as men massacre animals, they will kill each other. Indeed, he who sows the seed of murder and pain cannot reap joy and love.'

Pythagoreans believe in 'the transmigration of souls', or 'reincarnation'. In other words the hamburger you eat might be your father, and you might end up in the sausage your son eats.

Gnostics favor a vegetarian diet for spiritual reasons.

Today, Indian vegetarians, primarily lacto vegetarians, are estimated to make up more than 70% of the world's vegetarians. They make up 42% of the population in India. Surveys in the U.S. have found that roughly 12.8% of adults eat no meat, poultry, or fish.

Defining animals as consumer items or as living beings demanding our respect

Whether or not animals will be treated as a means to an ends is a function of how they are defined. This will reflexively define our interactions with them. Our dominant western culture is informed by a Judeo-Christian

religious background which defines nature as having been 'created' for our consumption, our pleasure, our exploitation. However Paul, the founder of the Christian Church, said that vegetarianism is preferable.

Sadly, most self-proclaimed 'Christians', like lots of self-proclaimed Buddhists, are conveniently selective in their 'interpretation' of their 'faiths', taking what suits them, what is convenient, and discarding anything challenging, demanding, inconvenient, or unsatisfying. You could say that they 'throw out the baby and keep the bathwater', in terms of ethics.

An awareness of the horrifically, often systematic, cruel treatment humans inflict on animals, must make one ashamed to be human. People find it easy to conveniently deny any personal responsibility for animal abuses. Many will even lie to themselves and deny the reality of everyday practices of cruelty. Such practices include intensive animal production, live animal transport, battery hens, animal testing of consumer products and pharmaceuticals, and the cruel abuses of animals in 'scientific' research.

Australia alone exports over 6.6 Million live sheep annually. It is cheaper to transport sheep alive, than frozen. The argument given is that Muslims require 'Halal' food, food that is processed in keeping with Muslim tradition. The slaughterer must say a prayer of thanks for the sacrifice of the sheep's life. Its throat is then cut, so it will bleed to death. It is arguable whether it is any more or less humane than the industrial slaughter in the west. However live animal transport certainly does add to the misery and suffering of animals. This 'Halal' slaughtering could be done in Australia. Many products are 'halal' certified, and exported to Muslim countries.

Investigative journalists documented a recent 'shipment' of over 50,000 live sheep to the Arab Peninsula that was in fact turned back by the recipient nation. The animals spent months in over 40 degree heat and terrible humidity, tightly packed into metal cages, with no natural light or fresh air, and with nowhere for feces and urine to go. The RSPCA was denied access, but secret photos they made 'illegally', showed hundreds of dead sheep rotting in the cages along with the living.

Even recent animal welfare legislation does not guarantee that animals will not be forced to endure agonizing suffering. 'Researchers' are allowed to inflict pain on animals if it is considered that the results of the 'experiments' would be jeopardized by the use of pain killers or anesthetics.

Veganism and Vegetarianism

Vegans do not consume animal products of any kind. Vegetarians refrain from eating meat, but they do consume dairy products, eggs, leather, wool, and other animal products. The more things whose interests you consider when making decisions the more considerate a person you are. Therefore vegans are more considerate than non-vegans.

There are many compelling arguments for the adoption of a Vegan lifestyle. PETA (People for the ethical treatment of animals) are against any form of cruelty to animals, whether of a malicious nature, or as a by-product of 'research' or the production of consumer goods.

'Peace Silk' that is harvested from abandoned cocoons, finely woven bamboo cloth, soy ('Azalon') cloth, and a cloth similar to silk which can be made from pineapples, are all the vegan alternatives to silk. Vegans reject conventional silk as it entails the 'roasting alive' of silk worms.

My message to Schroeder and you other Quantum Physicists is stop experimenting with cats! How would you like being 'alive-dead'?

You have been eating vegan products for years without knowing it

Vegan or 'analog' cheese, made of vegetable fat, is commonly used in cheap supermarket pizzas, in pizzerias, and kebab shops as it is 60% cheaper than dairy based cheeses. Many people have been eating such vegan products unknowingly for decades. Soy products have been used to 'bulk out' many meat products such as 'hot-dogs' and 'sausage rolls' for decades.

Veganism, Vegetarianism, and our environment

Animal agriculture is linked to climate change, water pollution, environmental degradation, and a decline in biodiversity. A world-wide increase in meat consumption is set to have huge negative impacts on the environment, in terms of water consumption, de-forestation, and environmental degradation. Over the last 60 years the tripling of the world's population, its burning of fossil fuels, its exploitation of mineral resources, its environmental degradation, de-forestation, and polluting, has changed the world more than all previous populations combined.

Environmental degradation connected with animal based agriculture destroys valuable 'ecological services' that we today take for granted. Here is an example to explain what is meant by 'ecological services'. The Catskills Mountains provides New York City with drinking water. The city was faced with need to build water purification plants, at a cost of 8 Billion dollars, to compensate for the degradation in the water supply as a result of environmental degradation in the Catskills. They found it was cheaper to repair the damage to the environment. This is an example of the 'free' services provided by ecosystems, which we take for granted, until the environment is so damaged that it no longer performs them. We are then forced to perform them ourselves, at massive cost. This reflects the failure of conventional economics to include the costs of environmental degradation in all our cost-benefit analyses. We thus made unsound decisions which the next generation are forced to foot the bill for. We simply 'shift' costs onto our children.

Agriculture uses 70% of the world's water. Most of this goes towards producing crops which are fed to animals that are then killed for their meat. For instance it takes 13000L water to produce 1kg of beef. This means that by going vegan, we can massively reduce our need for water, and free up water to return to the eco-system.

The United Nations 2006 report 'Livestock's Long Shadow: Environmental Issues and Options,' concludes that the livestock sector produces 18% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions as measured in CO₂ equivalents. By comparison, all transportation combined is responsible for 13.5% of total CO₂ emissions. The livestock sector also produces 65% of human-related nitrous oxide, which has 296 times the global warming potential of CO₂, and 37% of all human-induced methane, which is 23 times as warming as CO₂. It also generates 64% of the ammonia, which contributes to acid rain and the acidification of ecosystems.

In 2006 the former World Bank chief economist estimated that the potential damage of climate change is 20% of world GDP, the equivalent cost of WWI, WWII, and the 1929 'Great' depression combined. Remember that the most effective way to counter global warming is to adopt a vegan lifestyle.

A 2006 study by Gidon Eshel and Pamela Martin, assistant professors of geophysics at the University of Chicago, found that a person switching from the average American diet to a vegan diet would reduce CO₂ emissions by 1,485 kg per year.

The manure from dairy farms has poisoned vast expanses of underground water, rivers, and streams. In the Central Valley of California, the cows produce as much excrement as a city of 21 million people.

Steven Davis, professor of animal science at Oregon State University, argues that the number of wild animals killed in crop production is greater than those killed in ruminant-pasture production, including many mammals, birds and amphibians. He states that 'whenever a tractor goes through a field to plow, disc, cultivate, apply fertilizer and/or pesticide, and harvest, animals are killed'. However what he fails to add is that around 90% of this production is used to feed animals for slaughter, eggs, or milk production. According to the USDA, growing the crops necessary to feed farmed animals requires nearly half of the United States' water supply and 80% of its agricultural land. Additionally, animals raised for food in the U.S. consume 90% of the soy crop, 80% of the corn crop, and a total of 70% of its grain.

In tracking food animal production from the feed trough to the dinner table, the inefficiencies of meat, milk and egg production range from 4:1. The energy input to protein output is as high as 54:1. The result is that producing animal based food is typically much less efficient than the harvesting of grains, vegetables, legumes, seeds and fruits.

Vegans do not claim to be perfect. However the most Vegan of all, the Jains, do seek perfection. They won't eat anything requiring the cultivation of the earth. They will strain insects from their drinking water and cover their mouths to prevent the accidental deaths of insects during breathing. They only eat fruits that have fallen naturally from trees. They will avoid treading on insects. I was interested to read, a week after myself 'rescuing' a worm drying out in the hot sun, that Albert Schweitzer had also shown worms similar kindness during his life.

Remember that the fewer animal products and by-products you consume, the less you contribute to animal suffering, global warming, and environmental degradation. Anything that increases the profitability of animal abuse contributes to animal suffering, global warming, and environmental degradation. When we use the waste products of animal exploitation such as leather or gelatin, we reduce the costs, and increase the profitability of animal exploitation. This promotes the cruel practices we should seek to eliminate. A friend reminded me that some people will pay thousands of dollars for a pair of leather shoes, so the argument that we are merely consuming products that would otherwise 'go to waste' is a problematic one. Any time we make animal exploitation more economically viable we contribute indirectly to animal suffering, global warming, and environmental degradation.

Al Gore's Hypocrisy

Al Gore won the Nobel Peace Prize for the environment. He is of course wealthy enough to take advantage of all the available alternatives to fossil fuels. He can afford luxury, energy efficient housing. He can afford a hybrid car. He can live comfortably without making any sacrifices for the sake of the environment. However he is a hypocrite, demanding others make real sacrifices for the environment, when he himself will not make the one sacrifice that would make the greatest contribution to the environment, and to reducing global warming. The BBC interviewer reminded him three times that we should, for the sake of the environment and global warming, adapt a vegan lifestyle. Al Gore himself admitted this was true. However he refused to do the one thing that would have the greatest impact. He refuses to do anything that will actually inconvenience him. Al Gore is a big hypocrite.

The absurdity of Geo-engineering, given the simple alternatives of adopting a vegan lifestyle

Absurdly expensive 'technical' solutions are being offered in the face of global warming. Such 'solutions' would alter the earth's ecosystems, with unpredictable, and potentially catastrophic, consequences. Such plans include covering the ice-caps, CO2 vacuum cleaners, artificial clouds to reflect sun's heat back out to space, reflectors in space to reflect sunlight back out to space, massive CO2 'scrubbers' which would soak up CO2 from the atmosphere, and fleets of robot ships spraying sea-mist to lower temperature of total planet. One proposal is to pump deep, nutrient rich sea water up to the surface through plastic tubes, to promote the growth of algae. Some of these algae would absorb CO2 as part of their natural life-cycle, and take it to the bottom of the ocean with them when they died. However many of these algae are in fact toxic and harmful to other sea life. They could threaten the marine eco-systems in unforeseeable and catastrophic ways.

Such absurd 'Geo-engineering' proposals are being offered and seriously discussed. Scientists are quick to warn us that we do not know enough about the operations of the planet's systems to predict, let alone manage, the consequences. Such aggressive interference in these systems is a massive gamble.

What is not being discussed is the simple alternative, that of adapting a vegan lifestyle. This would save much of our rain-forest, reduce green-house producing gas emissions by more than any eliminating all forms of mechanized transportation combined. The health-care cost savings would be immense. We would also become more deserving of good fortune than we currently are. 6 degrees between us and a new ice-age

During the summer of 2003, 30,000 people died in France alone, due to the heat-wave conditions. If the Amazon disappeared then the average world temperature would rise by three degrees, and such 'heat-wave' conditions would become normal summer weather, rather than the exception they currently are. An average change in the earth's temperature of 6 degree would return us back to the ice age, or the age, temperature-wise, of the dinosaurs. The key thing to comprehend is the concept of 'tipping points', which readers of the Dao will already be familiar with. Up to this point things change at a linear rate.

However once a 'tipping point' is reached, the consequences become unpredictable and sudden. Once cycles reach a 'tipping point' they accelerate exponentially. In fact the entire food-chain can be put at risk as change in PH levels destroy plankton, the bottom of the food chain. These plankton form the basis of the entire marine food chain. Becoming vegan will reduce CO2 emissions and deforestation more than any all other lifestyle changes you could make combined.

The life of a cow and the case *against* dairy products

At around 16 months of age a cow will usually be artificially inseminated. Around 280 days later it will give birth to a calf which will be removed within 24 hours. When a calf is taken early, the cow usually experiences no physiological stress, but if a calf is left with the mother longer than four days and then removed, the cows start knocking over fences to get to their calves, resulting in bedlam. Female calves are raised as replacement stock. If prices are high enough, male calves go to the veal market, to cattle farmers or to rendering plants to make other products; if prices are low, the calves are destroyed at the dairy.

Male calves endure 14 to 17 weeks of torment in veal crates so small that they can't even turn around. Female calves are often slaughtered soon after birth for the rennet in their stomachs, an ingredient of most commercial cheeses. They are often kept in tiny crates or tethered in stalls for the first few months of their lives.

In the corporate-owned dairy 'factories' which already dominate the industry, and which are buying out the smaller, family run 'farms', cows are warehoused in huge sheds. Growth hormones and unnatural milking schedules often cause dairy cows' udders to become painful and so heavy that they sometimes drag on the ground, resulting in frequent infections and an excessive use of antibiotics. The image promoted in the media of healthy, happy ('Milka') cows grazing in the mountains is not at all representative of the experience of most 'dairy' cows. A maximum security prison would be more representative.

On the more traditional dairy 'farms', the mother lives in a free stall, moving around, walking outside, drinking and eating. In spring and summer she may be allowed to 'graze'. About 85 to 90 percent of cows are machine-milked twice a day; 10 to 15 percent are milked three times a day. Cows lactate for about 10 months. About the second month of lactation they are usually artificially inseminated again. Eventually, a cow's milk dwindles, the dairy stops milking her, and she 'dries off'. A cow will live this way from about three and a half to five and a half years. Retired cows would cost about \$40 a month to feed. They are therefore 'butchered' as soon as exploitation of them is unprofitable. Today the U.S dairy industry has 9.3 million cows. With some variations, commercial goat dairies follow similar practices. Always keep in mind that most industrial-farm animals endure their entire life-cycle without ever having seen a pasture.

Health risks associated with the consumption of animal products

Recent research indicates that dairy products may actually exacerbate osteoporosis, rather than prevent it, since their high-protein content leaches calcium from the body. Population studies, backed up by a groundbreaking Harvard study of more than 75,000 nurses, suggest that drinking milk can actually produce osteoporosis. Studies indicate that excess protein intake from animal sources may lead to kidney stones, and the demineralization of bones, increasing the risk of fractures.

Dairy products are a health hazard. They contain no fiber or complex carbohydrates and are laden with saturated fat and cholesterol. They are contaminated with cow's blood and pus and are frequently contaminated with pesticides, hormones, and antibiotics. Dairy products are linked to allergies, constipation, obesity, heart disease, breast and prostate cancer, and other diseases.

Dr. Benjamin Spock, America's leading authority on child care, spoke out against feeding cow's milk to children, saying it can cause anemia, allergies, and insulin dependent diabetes, and in the long term, will set kids up for obesity and heart disease, America's number one cause of death. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Dairy products make up 40 percent of the bulk of the food the average American eats.

A survey of 620 women in Singapore revealed that, among pre-menopausal women, those who regularly ate soya protein and soya products in general had about half the normal risk of developing breast cancer. In contrast, the consumption of red meat and animal protein was linked with an increased risk of breast cancer in pre-menopausal women.

Avian flu in poultry, foot-and-mouth in sheep, PCBs in farmed salmon, generally high dioxin concentrations in animal products, artificial growth hormones, antibiotics and BSE in cows, and the deadly strain of E. coli virus found in dairy and meat cattle, are all health risks that could be avoided by a vegan lifestyle.

The food chain should give us pause

Toxins are traditionally diluted in rivers, lakes, and the ocean. In other words toxic waste has traditionally been pumped out into lakes which ultimately feed rivers, which flow into the oceans. This seemed a reasonable, cheap solution. However what people failed to consider is that the bulk of living organisms on this planet live in the oceans. They are filter feeders such as plankton. These are eaten by larger organisms, which are in turn eaten by fish and other 'fruits of the sea' which end up as dinner for many humans.

These toxins thus become concentrated at the top of the food chain, in larger animals including humans. Each time you go up a rung on the food chain the toxins, which were initially diluted in the sea water, become more and more concentrated. Ultimately they end up in our bodies, and in mother's milk. In fact human mother's milk is so toxic today, that it would be illegal to transport it across state lines, if it were treated like any other foodstuff.

Health and nutrition benefits of a vegan diet

There is compelling scientific research in the fields of health and nutrition crediting vegan diets with lowering the risk of colon cancer, heart attack, high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, prostate cancer, and stroke.

Vegan females experience little or no PMS. Studies show that the higher the ratio of plant to animal protein that is consumed, the lower the symptoms and incidence of PMS.

It may take up to five years to exhaust the body's reserves of vitamin B12, however plant sources of B12 are unreliable, so it is recommended that vegans take a multi-vitamin, or eat foods 'fortified' with B12. Some people with a B12 deficiency will develop pernicious anemia. The symptoms of this disease can be masked by folates, found in green leafy vegetables. Vegetarians should therefore supplement their diet with B12, even though they have no symptoms (the folates, can 'mask' them). Remember that the B group vitamins operate synergistically, so don't take a B12 supplement alone. Take a balanced B group supplement. A B12 deficiency can produce feelings of guilt. The B12 deficiency itself can be the result of tapeworm infection. These parasites can grow up to 30 meters long.

As a poorly managed vegan diet can lead to reduced levels of calcium, iodine, and vitamins B12 and D, vegans are encouraged to take supplements. They should use iodized salt or include some form of kelp (seaweed) in their diets. Soy is the best vegan source of protein, being more or less the equivalent of milk. A combination of corn and beans in the ration 3:2 is also considered the protein equivalent of milk.

Spending 15 to 30 minutes every few days in the sun can allow your body to synthesize vitamin D from oil on the skin. Winter is also no problem, as the body does not 'use up' vitamin D, and therefore supplies of Vitamin D can last many years. In any case Soy milk fortified with Vitamin D and calcium is a good equivalent to milk. Note that adequate sources of Vitamin D and Calcium, together with regular weight-bearing exercise, will all ensure strong bones and prevent fractures.

Common misconceptions about protein

Amino acids are the building blocks for protein, which is necessary for maintaining tissues and for sustaining growth. Amino acids are also used to make hormones and other physiologically active substances. Authorities can't appear to agree on how much protein we need. The body can produce all but 8 of the amino acids required to build muscle tissue, hair, and so on. Most plant sources of protein contain all of the 8 'essential' amino acids: isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine, phenylalanine, threonine, tryptophan and valine; and the histidine and taurine that infants require. Plant proteins are not 'inferior' to animal proteins.

Most foods have all the amino acids in adequate amounts to optimize the health of the human organism. Today Nutritionists state clearly and unequivocally that diets based solely on plant foods easily supply the recommended amounts of all the essential amino acids, and that protein combining at each meal is not necessary.

The World Health organization has now abandoned the traditional method of assessing the value of proteins to the human body, which used rats, as misleading. It was this method which defined plant sources of protein as inferior to animal sources.

The U.S Federal Government authority on nutrition has, since 2005, excluded all forms of meat products from its dietary recommendations. In other words, meat is not considered to be of nutritional value. It has the same position in the dietary recommendations as other forms of 'junk' food. Studies show that vegan diets provide the ideal amounts of protein recommended by the World Health organization and by the U.K's Department of Health. Infants and children reared on a varied vegan diet obtain adequate protein and energy, and are healthy and grow normally, while tending to be of lighter build than omnivore children.

The following amounts of the following foods provide 10g of protein: 24g of Soya flour 24 (soy flour is around 50% protein, and Soya protein is defined as the equivalent in biological value to animal protein. The fat reduced version contains virtually no fat); 39g of Peanuts; 41g of Pumpkin seeds; 47g of Almonds; 50g of Brazil Nuts; 51g of Sunflower seeds; 55g of Sesame seeds; 71g of Hazel Nuts; 95g of Wholemeal bread; 114g of Whole lentils dried & boiled; 119g of Chickpeas dried & boiled; 119g of Kidney beans dried & boiled; 213g of Wholemeal spaghetti boiled; 385g of Brown rice boiled.

While donating a significant volume of blood-plasma (protein) on a bi-weekly basis, the German doctor supervising the clinic advised me to consume around one gram of protein for every gram of body muscle. He recommended de-bittered soy flour, which I did. I donated twice weekly for almost a year. I consumed around 50g of protein, or 100g of soy flour. He recommended around 40g, for my 76kg body weight.

The best source of vegan protein is soy, followed by nuts, seeds, Wholemeal bread and spaghetti, and brown rice. Even tomato paste can contribute significantly to meeting your protein needs. More details on vegan nutrition can be found in 'Plant Based Nutrition and Health' by Stephen Walsh. This book is the most comprehensive survey of scientific research on vegan diets.

Vegans are unnatural?

I have been asked why vegan foods come in the form of 'hamburger patties' and 'sausages', as if that is unnatural. Carnivores forget that meat does not come in the form of hamburgers, sausages, and hot-dogs. It comes in the form of sentient beings that experience pain and joy.

The intestines of carnivorous predators are relatively short compared with those of plant eating animals and human beings. Herbivores need a much longer intestine to allow sufficient time for the digestion of vegetable fibers. However humans, like most omnivorous and carnivorous mammals, produce the enzyme pepsin in their stomachs, which is mainly of value in digesting animal proteins. It is obvious that we are capable of being omnivorous. However how is that an ethical or health argument? We can also murder, steal, rape, enslave, and so on. Such teleological arguments as 'can means should' are extremely dangerous. I doubt they are ever genuine. They are merely tools of disingenuous, specious sophistry.

Remember that we have receptors in the brain for opiates and hallucinogenics. Does this mean smoking crack is 'natural'? Does this mean we should smoke crack, inject heroine, and eat magic mushrooms?

These days animals are fed large quantities of steroids and antibiotics, to speed up their growth, and to prevent them from falling victim to diseases that result from the cruel and cramped conditions in which they are imprisoned for most of their lives. They are also full of adrenaline and other hormones due to the often horrific nature of their lives, transportation to slaughter, and actual slaughter. All of these substances end up in meat products which meat eaters then consume.

There are many health related reasons to replace meat with soy, wheat germ, and dietary yeast. These products not only supply a superior form of protein, they also provide many other highly beneficial nutrients not found in meats. Soy products contain calcium, which can decrease the irritability, cramps, and sleeplessness associated with menstruation. Calcium is also a natural pain reliever. Wheat germ is 25% protein. Soy flour is almost 50% protein. All of these are inexpensive.

Numbing and denial

Research indicates that people must engage in denial and numbing in order to overcome their natural empathy for the suffering of animals. This denial is collectively reinforced in a society which exploits animals. When even the Dalai Lama, who claims to be enlightened, denies his own 'moral' responsibility for animal suffering, he makes it easier for the average person to do the same. My arguments on 'why the majority is usually wrong' are most pertinent to this discussion.

Sensitive people are in a 'bind'. They recognize that consuming animal products produces animal suffering, and yet their society promotes the exploitation of animals. In fact during the enlightenment being a vegetarian could bring you before the 'Christian' inquisition. Leonardo Da Vinci was at risk of being 'roasted' for being both homosexual and vegetarian.

The 'social reality' of denying the suffering of animals, of denying them any 'rights', is hegemonic in most of the world. Exploitation of inherited inequality is rampant in the human world, and animals have inherited the greatest inequality. It is therefore to be expected that they will suffer the greatest injustices.

I 'love' the taste of meat, eggs, and dairy products. It was easy to 'deny' the suffering my consumption of these products was producing. Society promoted my consumption and associated numbing and denial. The awareness that I would not be sacrificing my health eliminated any practical obstacles to my ultimate resolve to sacrifice my own satisfaction in the name of justice, and eliminating all unnecessary and avoidable suffering from this world.

The more we benefit from exploitation and injustice, the harder it is for us to challenge it, to listen to our native conscience. We must sacrifice personal benefits, privileges, and satisfactions to follow our conscience. However once we do we begin becoming 'whole' again, and gain an 'integrity' that would otherwise elude us. We become 'whole'. We become authentic.

How many people would find it easy to 'chow down' on animals if they had to kill the animal themselves? Do you think the media would actually air television commercials showing animals being slaughtered? Think of all the excuses people make to attempt to 'justify' their unnecessary cruelty to animals. I usually just ask them whether they mind if I eat their pet cat or dog, to clarify the situation. The only difference between a vegan and the pet owner is that the vegan has empathy for all living things, and not just the ones that provide emotional satisfaction.

Surely the person who cares about animals, and is willing to sacrifice some satisfaction to avoid their suffering, is less willing to produce suffering in fellow humans. Perhaps our 'masters' wish to condition us to deny our empathy for others, so that we are more amenable to fighting wars, and exploiting the inherited inequalities of other humans.

Denial has many dimensions, all of which apply equally to our own unconscious behavior as they do to the deliberate 'spin-doctoring' employed by professional 'spin doctors'. The lie can be one of 'commission' or of 'omission'. We can fabricate a fantasy by producing a completely revised 'myth' or subjective reality, or simply keep the 'real' one, but simply omit the bits that are problematic, challenging, discomforting, difficult, demanding, disturbing, potentially painful or disquieting.

People/communities/societies engaged in such behavior are typically extremely violent towards anyone who challenges their 'lie', their fabricated 'subjective' reality. When the majority share a 'lie', it becomes the hegemonic 'social reality'. They'll roast you alive to stop you questioning and challenging their convenient 'official fictions'.

The next more subtle dimension is 'minimization', in which the truth is admitted, but the 'meaning' or 'seriousness' of it is 'downplayed'. My consumption of animal products does produce animal suffering, but they don't suffer that much, etc.

Transference is a 'strategy' of the unconscious or the spin-doctor, of transferring responsibility for the suffering, whilst acknowledging its seriousness and reality. It is happening, and it is bad, but it's not my or our responsibility. I guess this is the Dalai Lama's 'strategy' to facilitate his enjoyment of animal products, even animal corpses, whilst deluding himself as to the 'karmic' implications of his enjoyment. It's wrong, but 'I didn't do it!' The

actor's sub-conscious, or the spin-doctor's conscious strategy, is to 'shift the blame' onto someone else. Often a convenient 'scape-goat' is found to put the blame on. It wasn't me!

Another strategy is to speciously 'justify' the behavior the actor's unconscious, or the spin-doctor is consciously, is defending. This is where the original 'sophists' came onto the philosophy scene. Today they are called 'spin-doctors', Public Relations specialists, marketing professionals, and 'coaches'. They 'coach' anyone from guilty criminals and their lawyers for court appearances, to guilty politicians and businesspeople for media appearances. They work in the Public relations industry. They work in the advertising industry.

In most cases a degree of 'synergy' exists between what the audience is being told, and what they want to hear. People want to consume animal products as they taste good, and so they readily consume any propaganda that helps them deny, minimize, transfer responsibility for, and justify, their actions. They ignore any qualms or pangs of conscience they have arising from the empathy they innately feel for the suffering of other sentient beings.

People will believe their corrupt politician is 'innocent' or 'misunderstood' or 'had no choice' or that there were 'mitigating circumstances' and so on. They want this to be true, or don't really care if it is true, as all they care about is whether this politician represents their own interests. If the politician is corruptly, criminally, or just unethically acting in their own interests, they don't give a damn. They are only interested in pursuing charges made against rival politicians. This is how the supposed 'check and balance' of the political 'opposition' functions. However where all politicians risk being exposed, then the whole parliament will 'cover up' whatever is going on. Politicians only pursue allegations of corruption, injustice, and incompetence, made against their 'opposition'. They are only interested in such issues where there is a chance of political 'point scoring' and no chance of being 'tarred with the same brush' that they paint the others with. They will not risk transparency if it means the risk of being implicated in similar behaviors themselves, or having their own similar behaviors come under the spotlight.

More subtle is the 'denial of impact' or 'implications', 'ramifications', and so on, of actions, decisions, or behaviors. People will deny that one thing is related to another thing. They will pretend that actions can be considered as discreet, unrelated events. Pythagoras linked human-human cruelty to human-animal cruelty. Most people will conveniently deny this. People will deny the link between injustice and violence, between terrorist bombings and the violent actions of the U.S and British governments in Islamic countries. When a teenage runs amok with a rifle, the educational authorities and the society itself will act dumb, as if it has no idea where such a behavior might originate. They will collectively deny responsibility for the bullying, victimization, and mobbing that the 'protagonist' endured as a 'victim'.

Another more subtle strategy is to 'deny awareness'. This is the 'diminished responsibility' argument of clever spin-doctoring defense attorneys, referring to an admittedly 'guilty' defendants lack of awareness of what they were doing, due to the consumption of alcohol or other drugs, or PMS, or even 'violent television programs'. Mental illnesses of all varieties can be 'spun' into this sort of 'denial' of responsibility. 'The voices told me to do it'!

The denial that a 'connection' between the actions of different people is the defense of 'it just happened', it came 'out of the blue'. The relation of each individual act is defined as independent of any others. The actions are defined as unrelated. This is key to our present 'social reality' where most violence is treated as unrelated to the overall hegemonic set of definitions and systems of relations. Applying this sort of denial strategy, the drug abuser is defined as having a personal problem, which is in no way a reflection of any systemic problems in the society. At worst the problem is limited to illegal drugs. The relationship of the individual's problems to any structural or systemic problems is 'spin-doctored' away via this particular variation of the strategy of denial.

Of course those who 'benefit' from the opportunistic exploitation of the inherited inequality of animals Vis a Vis humans, will 'deny' that they are participating in any of these 'denial' strategies'. They will deny their denial! And when they become the victim of someone else's opportunistic exploitation of inherited inequality Vis a Vis themselves, they will deny that there is any connection between their behavior, and the violence they become the victims of! Of course by validating the opportunistic exploitation of inherited inequality, which is what the

exploitation of animals is, you validate the opportunistic exploitation of inequality per se. Those who live by the sword die by the sword. They will be 'hoisted by their own petard'. See 'Convergences' for details.

Fates worse than death and the true monsters

A particular species of wasp shoots its eggs into a particular species of caterpillar. When the eggs hatch they eat their way to the brain of the still-living caterpillar. We would find such a fate horrific. This wasp acts on instinct. It has no alternative. However humans can live optimally as vegetarians and vegans. We do not need to force living animals to endure fates worse than death in order to survive. In fact vegetarians are much healthier than omnivores. The effects of the concentration of toxins and anti-biotics in animal products is an unknowable quantity. Perhaps the 'bill' will come tomorrow, perhaps in a few generations. Anyway, we look at nature and withdraw in horror, when in fact we are the most gruesome of all monsters on this planet. The movie, 'The fifth element' has a typical Disney ending. However in reality, all the music, poetry, novels, architecture, dance, cuisine, fashion, art and so on ever produced by humans cannot make up for the completely unnecessary, totally avoidable, horrific, systematic, industrial scale cruelty that humanity has inflicted on animals, in warfare, agriculture, medicine, science, in research, product testing, and in the entertainment industry.

Nutrition and wellbeing

Your behavior can influence your health. I thought that I had inherited 'bad-teeth-genes', and then realized I had inherited 'too-lazy-to-brush-my-teeth' genes, which resulted in cavities. When you are tense, your scalp tightens and itches, reducing blood circulation to your hair. When you scratch your scalp, the inflammation that results can damage your hair follicles. Maybe you are going bald because you don't pay attention to when you are tense, and because you scratch your scalp too much as a result.

Maybe if you paid attention to your body, to your posture and muscle tension, and relaxed your face rather than scratching your scalp, or at least using a brush to help relax your scalp and ease the itching, you would keep your hair. Maybe you haven't inherited genes for hair loss, merely a predisposition towards behaviors that produce hair loss. In this case you can seek to change your behavior through cognitive and behavioral therapy, and keep your hair! Whenever I hear ringing in my ears I take this as feedback that I am stressed, and make a deliberate, conscious effort to relax, to breathe deeply, and so on.

We can no longer rely on fresh fruit and vegetables to deliver the vitamins and minerals we need. There are many reasons for this. Transport, storage, and processing can all collectively deplete many vitamins and minerals, even if they are actually present in the first place. Commercial fertilizers saturate the soil so that plants cannot take up important minerals, even if they are actually present in our over-farmed, infertile soils. Even if our overworked soils do manage to produce nutritious 'produce', our lifestyles and shopping habits can remove much of the valuable nutrition from our foods.

Free Radicals: oxidation and anti-oxidants

Free radicals are unbalanced molecules that steal electrons from other molecules. This can damage cells, and their DNA. Cellular repair squads within the body and cells can cut out and repair the damage, but the constant attack of free radicals can eventually lead to DNA imperfections. These impair the cell function, and hence the function of vital organs and processes. Free radicals are produced by normal cell metabolism in which fats and carbohydrates are converted into energy. They are also produced by chronic infections, and by environmental toxins like tobacco smoke, stress, and radiation, including Ultraviolet radiation from the sun.

Fatigue, tension, hostility, resentment, hatred, and other negative feelings, including, as Dr Ornish demonstrated, those of loneliness, isolation, disapproval and rejection, also have a negative impact on your bodies immunity, and its resistance to free radicals and other pathogens. Under tension and fatigue, the same work requires more energy. A body that would otherwise be able to repel infections and manage pathogens can fall victim to them.

Free radical damage to fats found in the bloodstream, known as 'lipid peroxidation', can lead to the clogging of blood capillaries, the reduced life of red blood cells, and plate aggregation, where blood cells stick to each other and the blood vessel walls, causing blockages.

Smoking, sunbathing, alcohol, and stress, all produce free radicals. Alcohol, Caffeine and the phosphates in cola also deplete the body of key vitamins and minerals. Alcohol appears to increase your chances of suffering from epilepsy threefold.

97% of human DNA is 'redundant', so most mutation is harmless. However, if mutation occurs in the 3% of human DNA that is 'active', damage can result. UV radiation, for instance, can smash molecules within the DNA, including the 'brake' chromosomes which limit cell growth. Uncontrolled cell growth is cancer. Where the uncontrolled cell growth impedes the functioning of cells or processes, it can lead to death.

Anti-oxidants are molecules that sacrifice their own electrons to free radicals. This balances them out and 'neutralizes' them. The function of naturally occurring antioxidants in the body is dependent on the availability of copper, zinc, manganese, iron, and selenium. Vitamins C, E, and Beta-Carotene are also anti-oxidant. Today we know that coffee is a good source of anti-oxidants, even better than black or green tea, and can even help prevent type 2 diabetes.

Studies in animals and humans appear to indicate that by ensuring an adequate intake of copper, zinc, manganese, iron, and selenium, and of supplementing the body's own antioxidants with vitamin C, E, and Beta-Carotene, we can enjoy well-being into old age, and 'die young as late as possible'. The degenerative effects of free radicals, and most of the symptoms of old age that are attributed to them, can thus be thwarted.

Naturopathy and nutrition

Nutritional supplements can apparently even prevent sunburn. 1000mg of PABA allowed test persons to remain in strong sun for over 8 hours without burning.

Excess sugar intake can produce 'oxidative stress' in the human organism. Sugar molecules react with oxygen to form free radicals, and produce damage in the kidneys, heart, eyes, and nerves. It sticks to proteins, producing problems for the body in producing high quality collagen. It becomes sorbitol within the cell, which accumulates and disrupts a high spectrum of biochemical reactions. Collagen is the major structural protein in the body. Excess sugar can lead to the excretion of chromium, which is important in building lean muscle tissue, and burning fat.

We should note that all starches, including pasta and flour, are immediately turned into sugar. Starch is of no nutritional value, other than as energy. Sugar is known to weaken the immune system, produce an increase in lactic acid in the blood, and is known to produce muscle pain, headaches, and panic. Sugar can also reduce calcium absorption, by encouraging alkaline digestive juices. These flow too fast to allow calcium to be absorbed from food. Sucrose, the sugar found in most fruits (not pineapple, or cane sugar), is a superior alternative to cane sugar.

The body responds to sugar intake by producing insulin. Insulin removes sugar from the blood and transports it to cells where it is needed. Excess sugar intake overstimulates insulin production. Too much sugar is removed from the blood. This is the reason why a large intake of sugar will give you an instant burst of energy, but will leave you feeling lethargic and fatigued. The overproduction of insulin depletes the blood of sugar. This produces exhaustion.

Folates, found in the foliage of leafy vegetables, are necessary for healthy chromosomes. Pregnant women are informed to maintain adequate folate intakes before and during pregnancy.

Tomatoes, leafy greens, deep orange vegetables, and red and yellow foods, are all rich in carotenoids. These have many positive properties and benefits.

One teaspoon of salt a day is recommended for optimal blood pressure and fluid retention. Too much leads to bloating. Iodized salt should be used, for its health benefits. It costs just a few cents more per kg.

Religion can lead to rickets. Some religious beliefs both require their adherents to cover their face and hands and proscribe all dairy products. Exposure of the oil present on the skins surface to strong sunlight is necessary for the body to produce its own vitamin D.

The denial of this synthesis of vitamin D, and the lack of dairy products that could otherwise make up for this lack of sun exposure, have produced vitamin D deficiency in some people, which can produce the illness known as 'rickets'.

I have studied a number of books and noted the lowest common denominator of supplements that are scientifically 'compelling' in relation to maintaining optimum health and well-being, and preventing and ameliorating a wide range of health conditions. In general, the doses recommended can be taken safely by anyone. However we must always remember that when we take dietary supplements in high doses we are using them therapeutically, as medications. They could interfere with any prescription medications that you are currently taking, so consult your doctor.

We should always remember that it is the balance and relative proportion of vitamins and minerals in your diet that is key to health. Too much or too little can produce equally undesirable effects. Chemicals interact synergistically and catalytically and must be present in the optimal balance for optimal health to be attained. We must adopt a 'holistic' approach. Increasing the quantity of one vitamin or mineral can increase the body's need for others, and if the others are not present or supplemented, the good deed you thought you were doing yourself could actually result in a nutritional imbalance, produce deficiencies, and therefore harm you.

You should take the vitamins and minerals in the proportions indicated. Both the dosage and the balance can mean the difference between helping and hurting. All nutrients should ideally be taken at the same time, to

ensure they are all present in the right balances at the same time, as any vitamins and minerals are water soluble, and are not stored in the body.

Also remember that each person's body has different needs, so it is worthwhile visiting a nutrition specialist, or Naturopath, to find out what is best for you. You may find that your diet is too high in some nutrients and too low in others, relative to the balance that is uniquely optimal for you. And remember that as your life circumstances change, your body's needs will also change.

It is important, for absorption of nutrients, that food be eaten in a relaxed, positive atmosphere. We should take, but not rely on, supplements. We should seek out whole foods. Whole foods can heal, and make us whole again. Whole foods contain a valuable range of micro-nutrients, bio-flavonoids, and a range of substances which have not yet been adequately researched.

You should note that it can take years for the effects of nutritional deficiencies (too little), or toxicities (too much) to emerge.

A specialist can inform you about ways to treat more specialized medical conditions with the therapeutic, that is, medicinal, use of supplements. The following is a brief rundown of nutrients, their natural sources, their functions, and their therapeutic uses and dosages.

Beta carotene: carrots, sweet potato, rock melon, dark leafy green vegetables. Beta carotene is converted into Vitamin A. Vitamin A deficiency can produce eye and ear problems, especially when a B2 deficiency is also present. Carotenoids present in these fruits and vegetables provide many other known, and many other not yet understood, benefits, so they are preferable to Vitamin A supplements alone. One and a half carrots will provide around 25,000 i.u of beta carotene. What your body doesn't need, it won't convert to vitamin A, so there is no risk of toxicity with beta-carotene. However Vitamin A itself can be toxic in long-term high doses.

Biotin: soy products, yeast, corn, walnuts, peanuts, molasses, milk

Calcium: broccoli, Soy. When taking supplements, the 1000mg recommended, take as a lactate or glucomate. Lactic acid aids calcium absorption. Calcium has been used as a pain killer by dentists and even given to women just before birth to ease the pain. It has calming and relaxing effects. The presence of fat improves calcium absorption. Most people know that calcium is necessary for strong teeth and bones.

Iron: soy products, baked potatoes. A deficiency can of course produce anemia, with lethargy and paleness

Magnesium: broccoli, baked potatoes, bananas, yogurt, navy/lima beans, cashews. Necessary for every major biological function in the body. Improves enzyme function and therefore energy production at the cellular level. Magnesium should be taken in the ratio 500mg magnesium to 1000mg calcium. Deficiencies implicated in diabetes, retinal damage, blood sugar, blood pressure, and fatigue. A cheap and effective supplement is Epsom salts, those you put in the bath to ease muscle and joint aches and pains. Take one half teaspoon with your meals, 2 times a day, camouflaged with juice. Reduce the dosage if diarrhea occurs. Epsom salts can be used as a digestive also! Magnesium deficiencies can produce heart attacks, bad nerves, and moodiness. Magnesium can have a tranquilizing effect. Magnesium is lacking in most diets, especially those of alcohol consumers. Used in the bath, they can draw water out of inflamed tissues and joints.

Pantothenic acid: whole grains, mushrooms, peanuts

Phosphorus: yogurt, broccoli, Lima beans

Potassium: banana, baked potato, rock melon

Selenium: Brazil nuts, garlic, onion, broccoli

Riboflavin: broccoli, yogurt

Thiamine: wheat germ, beans

Chromium: broccoli, yeast, grape juice, whole grains, black pepper

Copper: cocoa powder, nuts, grains, seeds, mushrooms

Fluoride: tea

Iodine: Iodized salt, seaweed, milk, bread

Manganese: wheat germ, whole grains, nuts, cocoa, tea

Molybdenum: beans, grains, milk, dark green leafy veges

A: carrot, pumpkin, sweet potato, dandelion greens, rock melon, green leafy veges

B6: banana, yeast, soy products, peanut, walnut, whole-wheat. A high intake of liquids can increase your B group needs, as can alcohol and stress. A high intake of dairy products, which contain lactose that produces lactic acid in the stomach, can increase the bodies demand for B6. Taking supplements of more than 100mg a day of B6 can be toxic, so only do so under medical supervision. Remember that if you merely increase the intake of one B vitamin, you can produce an increase in your body's requirements for the other B group vitamins, effectively producing a vitamin B deficiency. Therefore always take a balanced high dosage B group supplement, rather than any particular B vitamin supplement alone.

B12: vitamin supplements

C: broccoli, peppers. Supplements are necessary to get the high recommended doses. C neutralizes toxins, and works anti-bacterially, works against infections, allergies, arthritis, and many diseases. It can help against stress, similarly to Calcium, having a calming effect. Intakes over 1000mg can lead to diarrhea, as with Magnesium. When you first start using C supplements your body will 'detox' and many toxins will be flushed out. C sacrifices itself when neutralizing toxins and free radicals, so the more toxins and stresses you are exposed to the higher your need for C to neutralize them will be. Take C if you take an aspirin, or any other drug, as it can increase the effectiveness of all drugs. To work out your personal best dosage, take supplements until diarrhea occurs, and reduce the dosage until it stops. Initial diarrhea will be the result of your body flushing out toxins that the C can release from your fatty tissues. 1000mg an hour for 1 to 3 days can help treat acute illness and infection. C dissolved in water can be applied to sunburn. C is vital for the production of collagen, the protein fibers necessary for cartilage and many other tissues. C improves iron absorption. Be careful though, as chewing Vitamin C tablets has been known to erode tooth enamel.

D: strong sunlight on 'oily' skin. 4000 i.u is recommended, to be taken with your highest fat meal. D aids calcium absorption

E: soy products, whole grains, nuts, yogurt, wheat-germ. High fat intake can increase your need for vitamin E six fold. E protects Vitamin A. E is known to help prevent and treat all types of cancers, and relieve the pain of burns, childbirth, and eliminate varicose veins. Remember that around 80% of all patients who had a pulmonary embolism had vitamin E deficiencies. The oil can be applied topically, directly to the skin, to wounds, and to burns. E deficiency can lead to weak muscles, poor posture, anemia, calcium deposits, all the characteristics of aging, and scarring of tissue in the joints and heart, producing arthritis and heart attacks. E can stimulate cartilage building, and help prevent and ameliorate osteoarthritis, in which the cartilage that normally cushions joints and allows smooth movement breaks down, resulting in grating, and the wearing down of joints, producing bone spurs around the edges of the joints, and pain. E deficiency can lead to blindness and poor health in babies. Only more than 50,000 units a day, long term, may produce toxicity.

K: broccoli, green leafy veges

Zinc: eggs, whole grains, nuts, yogurt, wheat-germ

Folic acid: foliage

Co-enzyme Q10: An antioxidant that also helps with fat metabolism. soy products, vegetable oils

Protein: There are many proteins, and a number are essential. The body can produce the rest itself from these. You need a full complement of the essential 'amino acids'. The best and cheapest sources of the full complement of amino acids are soy products, wheat-germ, and wholegrain products. The Recommended daily allowance is around 1 gram per kilogram of muscle in your body. The U.S Food and Drug Administration, F.D.A, Recommended Daily Allowance, R.D.A, is 70g. Nutritionists recommend up to 170grams per day. Soy flour is the cheapest and best source of protein. Wheat germ is very high in protein, and a good source of iron, and the full B

group of vitamins. Wheat-germ should be taken with dairy, or calcium supplements, as it is high in phosphorous, which depletes the body of calcium.

Soy products have many desirable properties, and can help reduce PMS, and Post-Menopause-Symptoms, such as 'hot-flushes'. Soy also contains lecithin, which scientists have demonstrated can increase memory, concentration, and general brain function. The U.S Food and Drug administration is now promoting Soy as a health product, and recommending that 40 mg of soy be consumed daily. The F.D.A allows soy producers to claim that soy can help prevent prostate cancer and heart disease. Tortula and brewers yeasts are also very high in protein, and the B group vitamins. Two tablespoons of lecithin is recommended to improve brain performance, and lower cholesterol. It can be taken as granules. Cold pressed vegetable oils, such as soy or safflower oil, contain lineolic acid, from which the body can produce its own lecithin.

Remember to refrigerate oils, lecithin, wheat-germ, and soy flour and soy products. It is recommended that if you take yeast or wheat-germ in large amounts, that you make a mix of yeast/wheat-germ:magnesium oxide:calcium glucomate in the ratios 1 pound:tablespoon:half a cup. One quarter cup of calcium lactate can be used alternatively to calcium glucomate.

Sodium, Chloride, and Potassium: normal table salt is sodium-chloride. The balance between sodium and potassium in our bodies is critical. Vegans consume an oversupply of potassium, which means sodium will be excreted, upsetting the balance. They therefore have a greater need for sodium. An imbalance can produce cramping of muscles, including the heart.

The B group vitamins support adrenal gland and central nervous system function, and help deal with stress. The bacteria in yogurt can produce B group vitamins in the stomach. Steam vegetables, rather than cook them in water, as the B group of vitamins is water soluble, and they will end up in the cooking water which you tip down the sink.

Sufficient water is necessary as a solvent for nutrients, and to carry away wastes.

If you have heart or kidney problems, consult your doctor before taking Magnesium supplements.

Fiber can decrease the risk of prostate problems for men, by reducing the level of reproductive hormones.

Due to one known case of toxicity from vitamin A, the U.S FDA set the daily limit for vitamin A from all sources at a very low limit. Nutritionists and Naturopaths often recommended 25,000 units for men, and less than 10,000 units for any woman that could get pregnant. Vitamin A doses above 10,000 are known to cause birth defects.

Copper and zinc should be taken in the ratio 1:10 (mg). If more than 15mg of zinc is in the diet, then 1.5 micro grams of extra copper should be taken for every 15mg of zinc. Zinc above 15mg can lead to competition between metals. Too little iron, magnesium and zinc can lead to insomnia.

Enzymes convert chemicals. Co-enzymes act as catalysts to chemical processes.

A balanced B group supplement together with 100mcg folate, 1000 to 4000 mg C, and 70mcg Selenium, taken twice a day, was seen to help against depression. However it is recommended to avoid taking C at night, as it can make it hard to sleep. 1000mg of Niacin Bromide has also been used as an effective treatment for depression. This nutrient is present in yeast and wheat-germ.

Sulfur stinks, but it neutralizes toxins. This may account for the benefits of sulfur-containing 'healing' waters.

Mono saturated fats (canola, olive) are generally healthier than polyunsaturated fats (soy, safflower, sunflower), for general cooking. A tablespoon of soy, safflower, or sunflower oil, however, is recommended as a means to providing the body with the nutrients to synthesize lecithin.

80% of stroke victims were found to have a vitamin E deficiency! Vitamin E has been found to decrease the need for oxygen, to eliminate scars and blood clots, and to reduce edema or water-logging. It can therefore help you reduce your weight and size.

If you eat a lot of wheat-germ, you need to eat calcium rich foods or supplements to compensate for the high level of phosphorous in wheat-germ, which can otherwise deplete the body of calcium.

When you sweat, you lose fluids, but actually raise your salt concentrations. When we sweat, salt is actually reabsorbed from the skin.

To prevent or alleviate the following: PMS symptoms, tinnitus, constipation, chronic fatigue syndrome, dermatitis, cancer, irritability, fatigue, carpal tunnel syndrome, asthma, epileptic seizures, metabolism, recovery from surgery and illness, skin condition, burns, cuts, bruises, bloating, stress, viruses, colds, flu, complications of diseases including diabetes, heart, and eye problems, muscle cramps and pain, Herpes, H.I.V, sunburn, toxins, wrinkles, vaginal yeast infections, prostate problems, insomnia, muscle tone, circulation, vision, taste, smell, libido, infections, bone density including jaw and teeth, resistance, concentration, mood, mental and physical fitness, immunity, energy, thinking, beauty, strength, endurance, emotional well-being, aging, and youthfulness; Take the following supplements with a high protein meal

1000mg Calcium (preferably with C and D and A)

25,000 international units (i.u) Vitamin A, but less than 10,000 i.u if you could get pregnant. The FDA R.D.A is much lower, due to only one ever documented case of Vitamin A toxicity for supplements over 2500 i.u. 400-500mg of oil based E 4000 i.u of D.

50-200mcg chromium piccolate. Diabetics require medical supervision. Most westerners are deficient in chromium. Chromium piccolate helps build lean tissue and reduce fat in adults that exercise.

1.5-3mg copper (and 10mg zinc for every 1mg copper)

15mg Iron 1000mg C

15-30mg Zinc. Doses over 15mg only with medical supervision.

250-500mg Magnesium. Half a teaspoon Epsom salts.

A high potency B group vitamin containing B vitamins in around the 50mg and 25mg ranges. The optimal balances include 50mg of some, and 25mg of other, B group vitamins. 50mg of Thiamine is known to help concentration, memory, concentration ;) and balance. Older people often have a problem absorbing the B group of vitamins, and could benefit from supplements for this reason. Plus a multi-vitamin and mineral supplement

Note that only brewer's yeast should be used, never baker's yeast, which depletes your body of nutrients, rather than adding them. Tortula yeast is best.

Note that processed white flour should be avoided, as most of its nutritional content has been removed. Wholemeal breads contain wheat-germ and whole grains, and therefore lots of B group vitamins, Vitamin E, iron, and protein. Whole foods also contain lots of substances beneficial to the functioning of our organism. Not all the micro-nutrients have been identified yet. Note that since the introduction of white bread, the general health of the population has declined, and the incidence of heart disease has skyrocketed.

The following has been recommended for sufferers of osteoarthritis

6,400mcg Folic acid

1000-3000mg niacinamide in 2-3 divided doses, taken under medical supervision due to potential for liver damage. If you take more than 1500mg daily, blood tests for liver enzymes should be taken after 3 months, and then annually. Nausea is an early sign of stress to the liver. Sufferers of liver disease should take no more than 100mg daily.

200mcg selenium

20mcg B12

400-600 i.u E

TROONATNOOR: GROUP DYNAMICS

Why the majority are usually wrong

There are particular benefits to be gained from making decisions in consultation with other people. Some benefits of group decision making include the sharing of diverse experiences, skills, training, cultures, ways of seeing and being, and particular individual strengths and focuses. Being less engaged is sometimes an advantage. A partner can casually observe things that you miss because you are tired, too focused, or even looking too deeply to see the superficial surface. Try proof-reading your own work to see how hard it is to even notice your own spelling and grammatical errors. We often read what we 'expect' to find on the page, rather than what is there. It is also productive for participants to interrogate each other while thinking aloud.

There are, however, particular dynamics which arise from group interactions which work to the detriment of ethical and sound decision making. Individuals often feel their accountability and vulnerability more keenly when they are acting on their own, rather than as a part of a group. This may be expressed as a fear of being caught and punished for their actions, or the fear that they might, through a change of fortunes or twist of fate, become the victim of the very acts and omissions that they are inflicting on others. They also often feel a sense of remorse or guilt, for having done to others what they would not like to have done to themselves, or others that they care about.

It is revealing of the true nature of 'guilt' and 'remorse' that the more vulnerable we feel ourselves and 'ours' to be, the stronger we tend to feel guilt or remorse. Guilt relates not to principles, but to fear of becoming the next victim of what we perpetrate on others, or of retribution, either here, or in the 'next' world. Our 'conscience' is more easily stung when we feel vulnerable. It is noteworthy that poorer, more vulnerable people, are often more generous than those who feel secure.

Sentiment and good-will are very fragile and unreliable. They are dependent on the 'desire' to define ourselves as 'good' and 'nice' and 'caring'. They are dependent on temporary positive feelings towards someone or something. They seldom lead to actual action on behalf of the referent, let alone true sacrifice or consistent and reliable action. People usually find excuses. The 'want to help', but find excuses or explanations about why they 'can't'. They will applaud movies and songs written about injustice, but will define others as the culprits, while defining themselves as 'good', 'caring', and 'nice', but 'powerless' to do anything.

No matter what privileges, power, and wealth they might one day accrue, they will still find excuses. They may make 'gestures', such as appearing at 'benefit concerts', being 'patrons' of causes, or 'appealing for donations' from others, but they won't do anything of substance, or sacrifice anything of real value to them.

Consider how many rich people are active socialists, and how many 'socialists' suddenly change their putative political 'principles' when their socio-economic position dramatically improves.

Membership of a group has a dynamic with reference to our sense of vulnerability. It operates in many ways to the detriment of 'principles' or 'ethics'. Membership of groups often provides the individual with a sense of security, and a sense of decreased vulnerability to accountability; to the potential for revenge or other negative consequences. In general we feel safer and more secure as part of a group than when we are alone. This acts to diminish the positive moderating influence of accountability and vulnerability, and results in a deterioration in individual ethics, what L Ron Hubbard referred to as 'tone'.

Of course when the group membership is particularly ethical in its decision making, when it has a high 'tone', then the group dynamic has the potential to encourage more ethical behavior in its individual members.

Group memberships are mostly 'inherited' as a function of an individual's socioeconomic-cultural-educational-historical, their 'holistic', inheritance. The individuals subjective 'motivations' for group membership are a function of this holistic inheritance. We are motivated by holistically inherited needs, wants, and desires. Together this holistic inheritance produces our perceived and real 'interests'. We share particular interests as a function of sharing similar holistic inheritances.

Some individuals merely seek the security and comfort of belonging to a group per se.

This is the 'end' they employ the group as a means to. They are not actively pursuing any other interests through their group membership.

Other individuals may have explicit 'political' ambitions or 'ends' which they intend to use the group as a means to attaining. They may have been the original 'founders' of the group, the original 'leaders', or they may merely seek to 'co-opt' an existing group.

In either case, those individuals in the group with explicit political motivations will manipulate the group to achieve their own goals, by having them endorsed as the group's official goals. Where the leadership of a group has unethical motives or plans, then individuals in the group may end up passively contributing to the pursuit of objectives they do not personally subscribe to or even condone, as a *mitlaufer*. They may merely end up 'caught in the undertow' of other people's ambitions.

Individuals risk losing the benefits of group membership, including the basic comfort and moral support of belonging, being welcome, and enjoying social approval, if, by failing to at least passively support the group's formal goals, they become excluded from the group. This contributes to the phenomenon of 'collective ignorance'. Insecurity, expressed in the longing for acceptance, approval and belonging, motivates the majority of humans to keep any doubts they have to themselves. They will even act contrary to their 'conscience', in order to secure and maintain the benefits of group membership. They will find some way to rationalize, justify, excuse, and legitimate their actions, repressing and denying any qualms or pangs of conscience they experience. See 'Convergences' for details.

I have experienced what it means to be dis-approved of, to be rejected, and victimized, for trying to raise the 'moral' tone or 'ethics' of a group. Your entire experience of the victimization and mobbing will be 'in-validated' and you as a person will be 'invalidated'. Your experience will, for all intensive purposes within the social reality, not have happened. You will be compelled to pretend that you were 'mentally ill', and to pretend that it in fact never happened. You will have to deny your own reality.

In most socio-historical constellations either they burnt you alive, sent you to the gulag, murdered you, or left you to die on your own, ostracized from the group. Today they just hope you'll commit suicide, which often people do. There are many forms of violence which result in death. You don't have to even touch someone to murder them. Until such violence is defined as violence by our legal 'justice' system, murderers will continue to be reassured and incited by the knowledge that they will never be held accountable for their ugly violence. They will perpetrate their violence free from any moderating fear of reprisal, revenge, or natural justice.

It is this confidence in their invulnerability and the fact that they will never be held to account for their violence that incites all predators and bullies to the attack. They are certain to satisfy themselves without suffering any negative consequences. The same principle applies to wild animals, school bullies-whether principle or child, Roman Emperors, and even Presidents and Prime-ministers a-la the illegal invasion of Iraq.

If you've never experienced what I am talking about then I envy you your naivety and innocence on the one hand, but also foresee that this 'blissful ignorance' will one day come back to bite you, and yours. As long as we continue to punish those who have the potential to raise us out of the gutter, we will remain in the gutter. Don't complain when you are the next victim of violence, if you do nothing to reduce and prevent violence in principle. You are, as they say, 'aiding and abetting' the perpetrators by remaining silent, and not supporting existing victims in their attempts at gaining, at minimum, validation of their experiences. It is this 'invalidation' that rape victims refer to as being 'raped a second time' by the legal process.

There are always witnesses to acts of violence, of victimization and mobbing, who 'just don't want to get involved'. Of course they don't want to risk becoming the next target, the next victim. When they or theirs are the next victim, they will only have themselves to blame. Violence depends upon witnesses passively co-conspiring with perpetrators. It depends upon people 'not getting involved'.

When the 'terrorists' announce they are going to blow up the plane carrying your family, you will no doubt claim that they are innocent victims. What did they ever do to anyone, you will sob! But in reality none of us are innocent. We all see things that shouldn't be.

We all see the victims. Injustice is a form of violence that breeds more violence.

Opportunistic exploitation is a form of violence. Genetic injustice is a form of violence. Violence doesn't spring from nowhere. It is predictable and can be traced back to its roots..

I just read that an Australian former State Premier was quoted as saying that 'the U.S is acting like terrorists'. Think about what it means that someone can make such an utterance. Like a terrorist? What does this indicate in terms of how we define terrorism and terrorists? It appears that a terrorist isn't someone who commits acts of terror. It seems they are not defined by their behavior per se, but by something else. This is terribly revealing about the popular language culture and the dominant hegemonic culture it is reflexively iterative of.

The U.S commit acts of terror, however we don't define them as 'terrorists'. So what is it that defines someone as a terrorist then? Is it merely a question of whose interests you appear to be murdering in the name of? If you commit acts of terror in the name of the dominant or hegemonic order's interests, then you are a 'patriot'. Only if you belong to 'the enemy' of the hegemonic order will you be defined as a terrorist. So in fact it is not what you do that makes you a 'terrorist', but who you are.

I wonder if that ex-premier really just didn't have the guts to say the U.S are committing acts of terrorism, and are therefore terrorists, or if he himself makes some distinction between people who commit acts of terrorism and people who are 'terrorists'. I would like to hear him explain this 'distinction'.

Individual psychology and group dynamics: more reasons why the majority is usually wrong

When a person feels guilty or defensive about a bad behavior or habit of theirs which they have not been able to rid themselves of, they will often seek to encourage others to engage in that same activity, or another bad one, to improve their relative status vis a vis others. If I am a drug addict, others can define me as inferior to them. By encouraging addictions or other weaknesses in others I can improve my relative status. They cannot define me as inferior if they themselves have skeletons in the closet. Of course, collectively, the popular culture is hypocritical, defining one group of drug abusers, say heroin addicts, as inferior to another group of drug addicts, say tobacco or alcohol addicts. In fact alcoholics and nicotine addicts are not really defined in the popular language culture as real addicts at all.

People often encourage each other's addictions and weaknesses in order to gain and maintain some social leverage over them. If I am not an addict, and I can promote their addiction, then I can actively promote my superiority over them. This can be used to provide a competitive advantage.

Further, individuals feel bad about their weaknesses. If I reinforce the popular culture, and define their addictions as habits, or satisfactions, then I can gain their gratitude and support. People can become addicted to acceptance, approval, and 'moral' support. Their addiction can be bartered into subtle forms of influence and power.

More generally, everyone feels that they have something to hide. People will be happy to gloss over each other's behaviors, in the hope that their own weaknesses and follies will be equally glossed over, and trivialized.

Most Great men of history have opportunistically exploited the popular culture's weaknesses by glorifying them and harnessing or adapting them to their aims of military conquest and power. The so-called Great leaders, from Moses and Joshua, to Alexander the Great and the Roman Emperors, through to William the Conqueror and Hitler, all gained their power through unleashing the ruthless brutality of their opportunistic supporters, in campaigns of terror, genocide, rape, and theft. They glorified the worst in their followers in the name of God/s, nationalism, racism, and historical destiny. We glorify them still in the popular language culture, defining them as heroic, as leaders, as Great. They were basically great murderers, thieves, rapists, destroyers, and specious sophists. They were great populists, they gave the masses what they demanded, or at least incited them to their worst, giving them opportunities to act on impulses that under normal circumstances they were expected to repress, in the name of 'society'. See 'Convergences' for details.

Individual prejudices or ways of defining things can easily be bartered into political power. The Jews have often demonstrated a greater prosperity relative to those other ethnic groups with whom they shared place and space. This of course provoked some jealousy. This was aggravated by Jewish ways of behaving and defining things which were 'exclusive', which defined Jews and Jewish things as superior, and therefore defined non-Jews, reflexively, as inferior. You can't define yourselves as the chosen people without reflexively defining everyone else as rejected by god. The Kabbalah defines non-Jews as inferior to Jews, even demonic. Of course there are New Testament passages that define the Jews as demonic.

By rejecting the popular cultures of the peoples with whom they lived, they implicitly defined them as inferior. The reflex of exclusivity is always the implication that you feel superior to those you exclude. You consider your rituals, customs, definitions, practices, food, dress, habits, mores, and so on, as superior to everyone else's, including the 'dominant' culture in which you live alongside, but not in. Some Jews whose ancestors had lived in Poland for 600 years still did not speak any Polish.

The popular culture is defined by the dominant behavioral patterns, beliefs, and rituals, which include prohibitions and prescriptions, taboos, norms, and tacit expectations, what some might call 'etiquette'. These expectations can relate to dress, speech, formality and informality in interactions, fashions, tastes, cuisine, and everyday behaviors. What is considered normal in one culture is often defined as obscene or even criminal in

another. Each culture has its own gods, its own mores, its own assumptions, its own institutionalized expectations about how people should interact with each other, 'outsiders', and their environment. In one culture the environment is considered holy and sacred. In another it is considered to be a vale of tears, an obstacle to be overcome, or an input to be exploited in seeking ever increasing returns to capital.

Politicians and leaders have, throughout history, used prejudice against Jews, or other 'conspicuous', that is, highly visible and recognizable minorities within their societies, to gain popular support. Hitler saw the possibility of stirring up a pre-existent populist sentiment against the Jewish community as a means to legitimate the Nazi party theft of their wealth and property, and the exploitation of them as slave labor, to fund his Nazi ambitions.

He was merely continuing a sort of historical tradition of exploiting similar situations. Hitler did not invent antisemitism, nor the idea of exploiting it. In fact it was Moses who institutionalized the idea of legitimating the exploitation, rape, and genocide of other cultures in the name of historical and nationalistic destiny. Moses murdered thousands of his own people merely for not conforming to his dogma. Hitler and Stalin, among many others, did the same.

Religious (vs cultural) Jews opened their own Pandora's Box when they invoked the notion of chosen peoples, promised lands, historical destinies, and ruthless nationalism. They have kept the lid of this Pandora's Box open to this day, as the rest of the nominally Judeo-Christian western developed world has, by venerating and dignifying the Zionists

The original Holocaust as documented, proudly, in the Torah and Old Testament.

The Torah and Old Testament validate, justify, and legitimate genocide, mass rape, sexual slavery, slavery, cultural extirpation, aggressive nationalism, terrorism, and any other behavior the popular language culture would normally associate with Nazism.

Our culture venerates and respects Moses. It holds up Moses as the paragon of 'moral' leadership. He was in fact at least as equally deluded, racist, ruthless, homicidal (actually Hitler never killed anyone himself, whereas Moses did), genocidal, megalomaniac, and destructive, from whatever angle you could want to consider, as Adolf Hitler.

Hitler had no less compelling arguments than Moses had for his incredible brutality. Both ruthlessly sought 'lebensraum'. It is scientifically arbitrary to glorify one and demonize the other.

Moses would have you stoned to death for wearing cotton with wool. In fact the most extreme forms of religious fundamentalism, whether Muslim or Christian, whether mid-American biblical-truth-fundamentalism (George Bush's 'base'), or the Taliban's Sharia law, all refer back to Moses, and the Old Testament, for their most appalling prohibitions and prescriptions. Few people ever really read their bibles, let alone the Old Testament. We will consider the many versions of Bibles, of Old and New Testaments, in 'Religion'.

Nazi, Zionist, and Bolshevik propaganda all bartered flattery and populism into political power, defining their supporters in popular, popularist ways the general population found satisfying. The masses allowed themselves to be seduced by this propaganda, independent of any ideological commitment to the Zionist, Nazi, or Bolshevik, ideologies. Populists are popular as they allow their follower to blame their problems on someone else, whether Jews, blacks, liberals, other ethnic groups, other 'classes', other 'races', other religions, other nations, other sexes, or other political ideologies.

Moses' plans did ultimately have to wait until after his death, for his son Joshua to implement, but they were his plans. Ultimately the Jews allowed themselves to be seduced by arguments that they were the chosen people, and that the territories they would steal had been promised them. They were promised sex in the form of rape and sexual slavery. Not only could they satisfy their lusts, but they could do so in god's name, and not need to fear any earthly or next-life consequences for doing so. They could rape and sexually exploit non-Jews with impunity, and still maintain the sanctity of their own women. The Pope gave William 'The Conqueror's mercenaries the same rights. Islam continues this tradition, offering its warriors the right to enslave and rape their slaves, and Jihad-*ist* martyrs sex with undemanding, full-breasted virgins, in heaven.

Read whatever version of the Old Testament you have, if you doubt what is written here. If you read it, and then don't feel ashamed to have it on your shelf, and in your libraries, then you can have nothing against anyone proudly promoting Taliban Sharia law, or 'Mein Kampf'. You can't have your cake and eat it too. Your dogma is no better than anyone else's.

Open the Pandora's Box of authority transferred from a fictional God, and you won't be able to close it. Once you have legitimated the idea of claiming authority in the name of a fictional god, then anyone can come along and do the same thing.

When you are the conquering, raping, thieving, enslaving master race, the game seems fine. Sooner or later, however, you will become the conquered, raped, pillaged, and enslaved victim of some other master race. Why haven't the Jews learned their lesson from history? The Germans have.

If you go through history then you will generally find that nations emerge, gain strength, and expand territorially through war and nationalistic ideology. However the dynamics of conquest are different to those of administration. Sooner or later the master race loses its edge, bores of the military life, loses its direction and motivation, and dis-integrates. Those who had been conquered have the natural motivation to fight back. They develop their own nationalistic ideologies, kick out the conqueror, and often continue on with the momentum of

victory to make their own conquests, and opportunistically rape and plunder and steal in the name of justice or retribution. Populists will accept any nominal justification to give in to the lowest common denominator in humanity.

People, over generations, gradually learn that war is stupid, ugly, painful, and unproductive. France and Germany have had their fill of war, and avoid it. The U.S still has not had its fill of blood and pain and suffering and waste. The religious fundamentalists in the U.S, those who claim biblical truth, are just as dangerous as those of the Taliban.

The 'Christian' fundamentalist right, who gave the Bush's their power, insist on an Israeli state, in order to allow the biblical 'Armageddon' to be realized. They desire Armageddon. In other words they seek the destruction of this world. And these people may hold the 'balance of power' in U.S politics! A reasonable person would be more worried about them than about the Taliban. In any case, both the Taliban and the Christian fundamentalists in fact seek and claim their legitimacy in the Old Testament. If you glorify Moses then you legitimate Taliban and Republican terrorism.

Group membership usually produces a lowering of the ethical 'tone' of individuals

It is productive to consider why it is that group membership usually leads to the lowering of the ethical tone of individuals. Bad habits are more easily adopted than those requiring genuine discipline and critical self-reflection. Extreme beliefs are less intellectually and morally demanding. Unprincipled and extreme ideologies and behaviors can bring easy satisfactions. The path of least resistance, that of acting on selfish impulse, with the focus on the immediate and the satisfying, is the path which leads to a lowering of individual ethical tone and behavior.

It is easy to get people to go along with behaviors and definitions that are immediately satisfying, easy, and ego-massaging. For this reason we should expect the lowest common denominators to define the tone of society, rather than ideologically attractive, but too strenuously demanding, ethics and principles. Take an honest look around you, and within yourself, before you challenge this statement.

Most religions have at their core traditions of appealing to the lowest common denominators. Their ethics usually apply exclusively to members of their own religious groups. Over time, within a general tradition, particular schisms occur, splitting the one church into many, more often than not defined by ethnicity and nationalism. In this sense ethics are applied more and more narrowly and exclusively first within the wider traditions, and then later within the particular sects.

The appeal of this exclusivity is that it allows members of a particular group to have 'exclusive' codes of ethics. They can feel secure from enslavement, attack, rape, murder, theft, and so on, from members of their own group, while having 'carte-Blanche' to rape, murder, enslave, and steal from 'outsiders'. It is like the notion of 'honor among thieves'. See 'Religion' and 'Convergences' for details.

Cultures of insecurity and hate

Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband, was an active supporter of for 'Victorian' Britain's Industrialization and moves towards freer world trade. In these he saw an opportunity to promote world peace and prosperity. He actively sought to avoid war, attempting, for example, to negotiate a peaceful settlement with the Russians over the Crimea. However British public opinion was in favor of war. The British public in fact 'demanded' it. They spread lies about Prince Albert that he was a spy and traitor, working for the Russians. Prince Albert later successfully gained treaties and alliances with an old 'enemy' of 'England', the French.

The working population of Britain was a victim of the oppression and exploitation of its own ruling classes. They were downtrodden and bereft of most human dignity. The reputation that the British working classes have for racism may arise from this. They desperately needed to be better than someone, so they chose foreigners and those on the fringes of their society, including homosexuals, to fill that need. Given the British tradition of exploiting their own working classes it is to be expected that racism and other forms of projected hate and insecurity should be pronounced in British society.

One expression of this 'culture of hate' was the racism expressed even towards their monarch's husband. Prince Albert was German. Of course Queen Victoria was conceived in England, but had German ancestry as well. In fact 'British' racism towards the Germans and the French are incredibly ironic, given the history of 'Angle-land' and its 'English' language.

Subjugated or exploited people are more likely to submit to their subjugation and exploitation as something legitimate or natural if you can condition them to internalize or 'self-define' themselves as inferior. They will then reflexively define the exploitative system of relations as legitimate. Reflexively, the exploitation will iteratively further reinforce their self-definition of inferiority. At this point the reflexive sets of definitions and systems of relations (of exploitation) begin to become hegemonic.

Successive generations re-produce these definitions and relations of exploitation. They become naturalized and taken for granted by the exploiter and the exploited alike. At this point they have become hegemonic. I became aware of this sort of 'conditioning' in the public education system in some of the most underprivileged districts in Australia, and South-East London, as a casual teacher. It is fascinating to see a Lion flinch when its 'tamer' gestures that it will 'smack' it as if it were a small child. The lion could tear the person to pieces in a few seconds, and yet it has been conditioned to fear him. This reveals the power of conditioning.

The British East India Company and the missionaries they had brought with them sought to eliminate Hinduism and Islam in India. They missionized, attempting to forcibly convert the native inhabitants to the British, Protestant, religion. This would allow them to dominate and subjugate them in body and spirit. They actively denied the local population their religious freedoms. This produced a seething resentment against the colonials, the imperial occupiers and their families, accounting for some of the atrocities they later suffered.

The British had also introduced a new rifle into their native regiments, ones that needed to be oiled down with fat. Remember that for Hindus Beef fat is taboo, as Pig fat is taboo for Muslims. The Hindu holds the cow to be holy and sacred. Muslims adopted the Jewish prescriptions regarding pigs.

When one imperial power occupies a country, they depose the current dominant hegemonic interests of their power and privilege, and appropriate it for themselves. These dispossessed tribal rulers were of course not happy with losing their privileges and benefits. Rumors were spread by them and their cronies that the fat that the British oiled their new rifles with was pork and beef fat. The soldiers refused to touch the fat.

They were given 10 year prison sentences with hard labor for refusing to obey British orders. Rumors were spread that the British had been defeated by the Russians in the Crimea, and that Russian troops were now advancing on India, to attack the British. The constellation of real and perceived conditions encouraged and motivated rebellions and popular uprisings against the British. Many of the imperialist occupiers were savagely

slaughtered, including women and children, who were especially sentimentalized in Victorian British Public Opinion.

The British public opinion and military response was to send British troops. Remember that the previous troops were of the British East Indian Company, they were mercenaries. British regular army troops were now sent to India. When they arrived they committed such acts of barbarity that many, including the Queen, were shocked.

Queen Victoria was already appalled at the seething racism and lust for war she had perceived in her English subjects, in their irrational lust for war with the Russians. British troops were now committing terrible atrocities in India. They appeared to have lost all notions of civilization.

In sheer horror and fear of a fall into barbarism, Queen Victoria made an official law that guaranteed religious freedoms in India. She publicly commented on the comfort and support that her own faith provided her, and her deep respect for the rights of others to the comfort and support of their own faiths. She signed laws protecting the rights of all Indians to practice their faiths in peace.

Crucifixions, Witch-hunts, and mobbing

Individuals with no particular fondness for or relationship with one another, will often still collude or conspire with one another in attacking others. The tall poppy syndrome is a phenomenon of this nature, in which people respond to feelings of inferiority by attacking any conspicuously successful, or even more provocative, potentially successful, individuals and groups. When crabs in a bucket see one of their own climbing out to freedom, they pull it back down into the bucket. It seems they just don't like seeing one of their own 'getting ahead'. The German term 'Streber' expresses the institutionalization of such 'mobbing' in German society.

Individuals tend to exhibit more extreme behaviors under the influence or protection of the group, than they exhibit on their own, as individuals. This is one outcome of 'group dynamics'. The 'moral' support and security of group membership can reduce the individual's sense of vulnerability to reprisal, and help them nominally justify each other's actions as legitimate or necessary. Individuals are demonstrably more capable of ruthless activity with a group's 'moral' support, than they are when alone and vulnerable.

The group may consist of only two people, but the 'moral' support of just one 'other', and the physical majority this represents in relation to one other individual, is what defines the two as already being a group, in terms of social action. At the other end of the spectrum, a tone of bureaucratic impersonality in large-scale organizations is at least as dangerous as the tone of small-scale personal vindictiveness and hate.

Bureaucratic impersonality allows individuals with no emotional intensity of commitment to any pogrom or action to deny personal responsibility for it. They can claim merely to be 'carrying out orders'. They can delude themselves that in this way they are not 'morally' accountable. They pass any responsibility or accountability onto their chiefs and bosses.

In this way actors can carry out horrendous actions without any sense of personal relationship with their actions. They can effectively de-couple their 'office' from their personal conscience. This phenomenon is much more insidious and dangerous in socio-historic terms than bitter vindictiveness. An interrogation of Nazism, Bolshevism, and the history of religion, reveals that impersonal bureaucratic behaviors account for a far greater proportion of human suffering than do personal, emotionally charged and motivated actions. Of course, where the personal and bureaucratic converge we have the greatest potential for ugliness, suffering, and destruction.

More negative group dynamics

An alternative strategy of the self is to seek to have that part that they disapproved of sanctioned and approved of by others. Pedophiles will set up pedophile rings in an effort to define their behavior as ok, so they can approve of themselves. Of course within the closed circles of the pedophile rings, which sadly often include senior public servants, politicians, and influential people, pedophilia is redefined as something to be approved of. The victims are defined as willing participants who enjoy themselves, or at least it is defined as harmless and victim-less satisfaction by those within that 'sub-culture'. This is an example of the problem of groups, whereby individuals provide 'moral' support to each other to 'naturalize' or 'normalize', even 'glorify' behavior that, on their own, they would feel justly ashamed of. It is another sad example of 'mobbing' and victimization.

People who feel insecure will often encourage other people to do 'bad' things, to do the same things that they themselves feel make them less worthy of approval, of acceptance, of love. If they can get other people to do the same things, then these people won't be any better than them, and this will reflexively allow them to approve of themselves and be approved of. This is why peer group pressure is often bad, as people who do something they don't approve of get other people to do bad things. If I feel like a weak addict because I smoke, then I will encourage others to do the same, so that reflexively we are all the same, and I am worthy of their approval and acceptance. They can't criticize me if they are the same. Whether the fear of criticism is real or imagined makes no difference to the person fearing disapproval and rejection.

People who feel insecure will put others down, and reject others they see as having low approval ratings, people who do not live up to the norms of success, either through their appearance or dress or lifestyle. They feel that they can not afford to be associated with such people, as their own status is already insecure.

They may be so desperate that they project things onto others, defining them as inferior and not worthy of approval. People who loathe themselves often seek someone to attack, someone to disapprove of, to reflexively boost their own value in their own eyes. If I can't earn approval, if I can't achieve some way to feel worthy of approval, then the only way I can boost my sense of value is by defining others as less valuable, even subhuman. This is one reason why people with the least self-esteem are the most violently racist, sexist, nationalist, and bigoted. The lower that they can define others for themselves, the more secure they feel about their own value. Of course they are not alone, and in groups the definitions can be made to stick by mutual consent. This is why people are usually more racist, more bigoted, and more nationalist and sexist when they are in the presence of others who at least appear to support and promote these feelings. This is why members of the lower socio-economic groups, those with less social status and approval, are more likely to express racist, sexist, and bigoted views. They need to define someone, preferable a whole group, as inferior to themselves, to reflexively boost their own self-esteem.

Contemporaneousness: the image in the mirror as artifact

To understand group behavior we must understand the human psychology of the individual from which it emerges. The nature of group dynamics is a propergent of the nature of our individual psychology. A group may appear to be a thing in and of itself, however it only exists contemporaneously with the interactions of the individuals which constitute it. It exists as the propergent, product, or outcome of the interactions of its members.

This notion of contemporaneousness (?) or contemporaneosity (?) is a key concept in seeking to understand TROONATNOOR. It is key to attempting to define the nature of awareness, and the nature of order.

Awareness and order may both be mere epiphenomenal propergents existing only contemporaneously with the particular sets of interactions which produce them, as their constantly re-produced product. Based on our experience of life, there appears at least to be a *prima facie* case to argue that awareness is merely an epiphenomenal product of the physical actions of our brains. Our awareness would appear to develop with the physical development of our brains, and its exposure to experiences. Our brains deteriorate with old age, or with exposure to pathogens, and we gradually lose awareness, until we are 'brain' dead. Without the heroic intervention of medical science this would automatically mean our death *per se*.

Psychotropic drugs produce 'awarenesses'. Small amounts of chemicals can have a huge impact on our awareness, producing 'unconsciousness' or altered states of consciousness, hallucinations, death, and so on.

Dementia demonstrates the physical nature of awareness. It denies us memories, and the ability to form new memories. Our awareness is physical, or at least requires a particular physical mechanism for its realization. A person suffering dementia is still aware, but they cannot construct meanings from what they are aware of. In this sense stimuli are a mere stream of epiphenomena for the person suffering from dementia.

You can cut some animals up, and the pieces will grow into new animals. This is referred to as *protopotency*. Proto-potency raises questions about the nature of awareness. Is it present in each part already, or does awareness emerge as the new 'whole' grows from the part?

Of course we must make a distinction between awareness of, and the potential to be aware. Our consideration of how our brains process inputs is a separate question to the nature of awareness *per se*. The answers to both questions may be the same, however we should consider them separately. It may well be that the firing of our neurons produces 'awareness', and that once they cease firing, the awareness, which was a mere artifact of that firing, no longer exists. It is no longer re-produced by the neuron firing.

However neuron firing may be related more to our awareness of, facilitating the awareness of things. Our senses of course allow us to be aware of things. Memory allows us to be aware of change, and 'intelligence' allows us to identify patterns among our remembered and current experiences, and relate things to each other, and hence construct meaning.

I guess the ultimate 'bliss' is pure 'being'. In this sense, being pure awareness would be the ultimate state of the godhead of eastern spirituality. It is the state of simply being aware, without being aware of anything.

A young man whose heart was stopped temporarily by an electric shock described his experience during this temporary 'death' as follows: 'It was sheer unbounded joy. It was absolute, total bliss.' He explained that he had no thoughts. 'I didn't have a mind. I didn't have a body. I was just aware. I was aware that I was aware. But it was pure wakefulness. I was grounded totally and completely in the experience of my own immortality.'

Reading of his experience reminded me of my own conjectures about the nature of awareness, as a primerty, as a pure potential for awareness, rather than the awareness of anything. It also reminds me of mind experiments I did decades ago in which I managed to 'experience' nothing. Of course I could only experience it in minute 'gaps', more or less conceptually. However I was able to grasp what it would mean to experience 'nothing', to merely be aware of being. Once on the telephone with a friend, Paula, I experienced a real 'bliss'. I was self-conscious of having no need to question anything. I was pure bliss without any need for anything.

The particular sets of interactions that produce a particular contemporaneous grouping or set of relations may become 'institutionalized' as an 'institution'. This institution may then be 'reproduced' over time and geography. Such modern institutions include that of representative democracy, rule by law, banks, schools, churches, and supermarkets. They only exist 'mirrored', in parallel to, or contemporaneously with, the interactions of actors with them and within them. The reflection in a mirror has no substance other than as a reflection of the things it reflects. This may be a useful analogy for the concept of contemporaneosity-contemporaneousness.

It is a fallacy of composition to define a reflection, or the institution, as things in their own right

Institutions only exist as their members or those who support them perceive the institution to be to serving their interests, or to have the future potential to be co-opted or re-directed into doing so. These interests provide the motivation and resources for the existence of the institution. Of course those actors who derive their powers and privileges from particular institutions will try to mystify the situation, and portray their particular institution, teleologically speaking, as necessarily necessary, as demonstrated by its very existence! They will argue, circularly and speciously, that the fact that the institution exists proves that it must be necessary, that it must be serving some necessary function.

Institutions can become ends unto themselves, even after failing to serve any external interests. Functionalist hegemony often results in institutions surviving as they manage to maintain the appearance of being necessary. This may be the case with many military and religious institutions. As long as an institution manages to gain support and influence it can survive. At this stage the institution has become self-serving, having ceased to produce any real value for the society that provides it with the material resources and legitimacy it requires to survive. It gains its legitimacy out of mere functionalist teleology, and its material resources out of its situation within the system of hegemonic relationships.

Many institutions, upon interrogation, will reveal themselves to be at such a stage, redundant, but influential. However challenging any particular institution represents a general threat to the members of all other institutions who feel that they themselves might end up being defined as unnecessary or redundant. In this way all institutions may join ranks and defend other redundant 'white elephants', as a precaution, to reduce the chances of becoming the next target for interrogation.

It is appropriate at this point to discuss the notion of unofficial goals. The stated objectives or mission statement of an organization have at least a superficial degree of transparency in that they tell us something about the organization and why it exists. More problematic, however, is the existence within organizations of multiple informal objectives.

In any organization there are multiple 'factions' or sub-groups with multi-various positions with regard to the official mission statement and objectives. Some are totally committed to these aims. Some are apathetic and indifferent to them. Others are actively subversive to them. Some of these subversives may pay lip service to the official objectives while conspiring against them. Others within this subversive sub-group may be openly hostile and rebellious. They may be publicly seeking to overthrow the leadership, and have their own objectives officially adopted by the organization.

Most members of a group or organization are only superficially engaged, only instrumentally motivated. They have no affective or intrinsic interest in the organizations they belong to. They pay homage to the organizational goals only to gain access to the benefits of organizational membership, including money, camaraderie, social interaction, belonging, and a structure for their daily lives. For some the organization itself represents a 'resource' to meet their own objectives, including networking, office supplies, telephony, and training. In extreme cases, the organism may represent a 'host organism' to the sub-culture within it. This sub-culture lives off the organization as a 'parasite', using the available organizational resources to pursue its own interests.

My experience is that many public servants are mere parasites with no interest in 'serving' the public. These 'public servants' have avoided having problems identified on their 'watch'. They seek to be promoted away from where the problems are. Then no-one will be able to hold them accountable for the problems they failed to solve. They will be able to blame the others who inherited the problems. These people will then claim no responsibility as they merely inherited the problems. In this way no-one is held accountable or responsible, and the problems go unaddressed, until some crisis makes continued denial impossible. Then, problems which could have been dealt with

much more simply and at a lower cost, had they been addressed earlier, in a timely manner, will impose a greater burden on taxpayers and the wider community.

Commissions will waste time congratulating themselves on how 'pro-active' they are, on how 'transparent' they are behaving, on how big their salaries and expense accounts are, how much fun their 'conventions' are, and how right and good they all are, while doing little but window dressing.

However this is fine by all involved, as no-one actually wants them to find problems, as that might lead to someone being held accountable for them. Someone might even demand that someone actually solve the problems. Anyone with the ambition, let alone competence, to 'solve' the actual problems will already have been victimized out of the organization by one means or another. They would have left of their own accord, out of sheer contempt and frustration. Those who were too committed would have been violently 'Health-quested' out of service.

No reasonable, ambitious, competent, ethical, motivated, talented, intelligent person would ever even consider working for the public service. To paraphrase George Bernard Shaw, we are indebted to such unreasonable people for any the progress that has been forced upon our public services. In reality most change has been forced upon the public service from outside of its organizational ranks. It is virtual 'suicide' to attempt such changes from within.

The naive spectator might believe that 'grievance management protocols' and internal reviews mean something. However anyone who has ever tried to follow such protocols will tell you they are pure 'impression management' with no actual substance or practical value. They weren't intended to be followed. They are pure window dressing for the benefit of public relations.

If you doubt me then apply the 'Markus' test to the grievance procedures handling guidelines and the supposed 'efficacy' or even 'good intentions' of the 'Ombudsman'. Show me any instances where someone who has lodged a grievance has been defined as a victim and has actually been given compensation. Show me one case of a popular public sector employee having been formally reprimanded, let alone punished, for waste, incompetence, or much more importantly, allowing or having been party to mobbing or victimization. Do you really believe that the nation's largest employers have never had even one incident of mobbing? What are the odds of that reflecting the reality of the modern workplace?

The informal public sector culture has no respect for grievance handling procedures. There is no effective means to compel anyone to follow them. No-one has ever made anyone accountable for not following them. They aren't worth the paper they are printed on. They are just another example of public sector waste. The supposed 'watchers' are like the figurative 'foxes watching the chicken-coop'.

No-one the public service 'executives' or politicians thought was likely to actually investigate victimization, abuse of power, incompetence, waste, or corruption, would ever be considered a potential candidate for the position of 'ombudsman'. The 'watcher' will be chosen for their implicit loyalty to the 'watched'. They will be selected from the ranks of the watched. This person will have demonstrated their complete lack of any ambition for 'finding problems', let alone investigating them. This person will know who is 'buttering their bread'. They will not 'bite the hand that feeds'.

This 'ombudsman' will eventually resign and return back to the 'folds' of those they were meant to 'watch', or will receive a generous 'early retirement package'. After all, it is really stressful work not-investigating corruption, incompetence, waste, mobbing, HealthQuesting, and victimization. Impression-managers are always highly rewarded. They are also welcome everywhere. They are the best paid of all professions. They have no trouble finding organizations to employ them as 'hired guns'. 'Mercenaries' with absolutely no principles or ethics will always be welcome somewhere.

A leadership usually arises within a group which to varying degrees pursues the group's agendas and imposes its own agendas. The study of the particular psychologies of a groups' leaders may provide an understanding for the motivations and agenda of the leadership, however it is much more important to understand how individual human

psychologies interact to make the group something that can be manipulated and directed by these leaders in the first place.

This is a very productive approach, as it gives insight into more general temporary group behaviors where there is no explicit leadership or political motivation in the grand sense of politics. This approach can help explain everyday individual political interactions, those in which inter-actors attempt to promote their perceived interests, while gaining approval and acceptance, for themselves generally, and their behavior in particular. Positive definitions are as emotionally rewarding as material benefits, and often bring material benefits in their wake.

Many 'Calvinists' and other 'Protestants' value the emotional security of feeling 'favored' and 'rewarded' by their 'god' as much as their actual material 'success' itself. They feel that god rewards those he loves. Some Americans, and probably lots of middle-class people world-wide, are well-known for their contempt of the poor. Their logic is that the poor must be 'out of favor with god'. Of course the 'logic' is purely self-serving and circular. People want to both enjoy material success and feel 'right with god', to feel like good, nice, upright, 'godly' people.

They can justify their lack of 'Christian charity' by claiming that 'god' must be punishing the poor. They can then ignore Jesus' pleas for them to treat everyone as if they were Jesus himself. They can exploit the poor, and ignore them, while feeling 'morally' superior to them. They can avoid any compulsion to help the poor by reason(s)ing that that would be to go against 'god's' wishes.

If you construct a religion, don't expect the potential good of your lies to be expressed as strongly as the potential bad. People are 'opportunistic' in their 'interpretations' of religious dogma. They take what is convenient and ignore or distort what is challenging. So-called 'Christians' use their religious dogma to justify and legitimate exploitation, rather than as a platform from which to eliminate exploitation. The philosophy of the teacher Jesus is lost in the religious dogma. The same thing happened in Hinduism. The caste system at best became, and at worst was in fact intended as, a justification of injustice and inequality.

One translation of 'Bhavagad' Gita' is 'As it is', which is basically the phrase I keep repeating, 'The Realities Of Our Nature, And The Nature Of Our Realities'. The Bhavagad' Gita apparently predates Christianity and Buddhism. Its message is very similar to both. See 'Religion' for details.

The problem is, there are no problems

A particular group dynamic operates in the politically competitive world of management. Often the management of impressions is more important than actual performance. This can promote a filter effect on bad news, on the flow on information about problems. Middle management may consider it a disadvantage for upper management to know that they are experiencing problems. They may then encourage their subordinates not to report them. These lower level supervisors will then become socialized into not reporting problems. Those that do will then be the exception, and will appear to be having problems that the others are not having. They will thus appear incompetent. They will fail to gain promotions.

Those who honestly report real problems will never enter into the middle and then senior levels of management in which decisions are made. Thus is the organizational culture of denial forged. Only people whose instinct is not to report problems, and those who have learned to repress their natural tendency to do so, will ever reach the decisional levels of any organization.

The organization will soon develop a culture in which problems are not identified. All members will come to recognize the career limiting aspect of reporting problems. Reporting problems will become known as a C.L.M, a career-limiting-move.

Problems will eventually overrun the whole organization, causing it to fall into a state of crisis. The greatest problem was that of information flow. The problem was, there were no problems. The organization was defined by a culture of denial. This is why crises occur. This is why problems come to the surface all at once. This also explains why crises are often the only opportunity to address problems. The result of crises is often social and technological advances. They say 'wisdom is the ear of suffering'. People only tend to listen to 'whistle-blowers' after crises have made it impossible to go on 'living in denial'. The recent 2008 financial meltdown and recession is the most recent example of a crises prompting regulation in the financial sectors, and more transparent and responsible government finances.

Under general organizational conditions problems are not identified, and hence no solutions are even sought. Crises make the recognition and redress of problems unavoidable. The crises make management accountable, denying it the possibility of hiding in convenient ignorance and denial. In a crises management are forced to take active responsibility. They are openly accountable as the crisis, in its extreme stages, is a public phenomenon. Problems which up until this point were being defined as the private problems of the individuals reporting them, and therefore having them, can no longer be denied.

Often the only solution at this point is to replace key personnel with competent people. Of course senior management and executives all belong to the same club. The incoming management will provide the outgoing one with parachutes, ensuring that they have a 'soft landing'. They will hand out 'golden handshakes' to the old cadre. This practice is generally observed by all members of the club. They thereby ensure that, should they fail, they will themselves be rewarded handsomely for their incompetence.

In a genuinely competitive environment the crisis may simply be the relatively superior performance of competitors. Competitors may have developed a real culture of openness to problems and effective protocols for responding to and addressing them. Rather than merely preparing highly polished 'mission statements' and 'procedures manuals' which are mere glossy superficiality, devoid of substance, these organizations may encourage and respond positively to the identification of problems.

It is the lack of real competition in governmental and closely knitted NGO areas which accounts for the slow pace of organizational reform in government and the 'public service sector'. In the absence of competition, there is no-one to 'call' the organization to account.

By demonstrating superior alternatives, and attracting away 'clientele', its source of resources and power, competition forces organizations to perform. Performance requires the identification of problems as opportunities to improve and grow. Without competition, poorly performing management can hide their incompetence behind a

facade of impression management, and avoid ever being held accountable. In the event that some crisis produces some real transparency, management will be able to point to the fact that 'everyone else was doing the same thing'. This describes what happened in 2009. As almost everyone was doing the same thing, few executives ever took personal responsibility for their actions. In fact a year later most of them still held the same positions, and even had the audacity to award themselves multi-million dollar 'performance bonuses'.

Whistle-blowers who do draw attention to problems are defined as 'rocking the boat', and swiftly draw the 'slings and arrows' of their superiors and co-workers alike. They fear that rocking the boat may sink the ship, and are happy to sacrifice the 'problem maker', to throw them overboard. Not only is it an intra-organizational political exigency to keep everything quiet, less management be held to account, it is emotionally satisfying, especially if the person reporting the problems is a 'tall poppy'! In fact many financial advisors were fired from their banking and government posts for openly reporting their fears of the oncoming crises, years before the 'bubble' burst. It could have been avoided, from a technical point of view. However from the point of view of human nature, it was inevitable.

Mobbing has existed since time immemorial, only the actual processes and methods have changed. The mediocre mass loves to see the 'tall poppies' 'cut down to size'. It is the modern equivalent of a public humiliation ritual, a hanging, a burning, or a stoning.

In questioning the competence or ethics of the leadership or management of an organization, 'whistle-blowers' are reflexively questioning the competence and integrity, the positive self-definition, of everyone whose silent conspirings, failure to report, and failure to 'blow the whistle', contributed to, and defined, the organization as whole. Members of the organization will take general criticisms of the organization personally, knowing full well that the organization is a product of their personal acts and omissions.

Society, viewed at higher levels of composition, is a form of organization. At the societal level, 'the problem is, there are no problems', the 'culture of denial', translates into the phenomena of 'the silent majority', and 'collective ignorance'.

The silent majority refers to the situation where a majority of the population fail to voice their dissent and dissatisfaction, to articulate their genuine beliefs and convictions. Few people are willing to admit they are suffering. They work to maintain a public facade ala the television series 'Desperate housewives'. In any case, most people feel powerless to effectively articulate their dissent, or to hold responsible parties effectively accountable.

Most individuals fail to have the requisite legal and media resources. People learn quickly that they have little access to their legal rights unless they can afford a good lawyer. A lawyer will tell you that you get the justice you can afford.

We must also recognize how emotional or sentimental relations and connections often discourage social actors from articulating criticisms. They fear 'hurting' those they love and care about. This is not altruistic. They fear losing their partner's, friends', their family's and their colleague's, emotional support. They fear ruining relationships they value, which they feel they 'need', or which they simply desire. This is one of the negative externalities of interpersonal relationships. We will often live in denial, or lie and distort the truth, to avoid offending people, to maintain positive relationships with others we care about, want something from, or simply do not wish to make enemies of.

Another factor is that bureaucrats are rarely held accountable for 'acts of omission'. The focus of most bureaucratic 'management' is the avoidance of 'career limiting moves', CLMs. Bureaucrats focus more on avoiding mistakes, and impression management, than on actual pro-active performance. In this way incremental career advance is guaranteed. They are not accountable for what they don't do. They are rewarded for not rocking the boat. They are rewarded for 'having no problems'.

They are not held accountable for the value they didn't produce, for the valuable ideas they dismissed, for the new techniques and innovations that they didn't develop or introduce.

They will be rewarded for not taking any risks. They will be rewarded for not having actually done anything. They didn't inconvenience anyone. They didn't challenge anyone. They didn't question anything. They didn't offend anyone. They made it clear that there were no problems. They made it clear that they didn't want to hear about any problems. They never made their bosses look bad by identifying problems. They never threatened their bosses' egos by suggesting that there might be better ways of doing things!

Proactive management means continual innovation. This will inconvenience those who don't like to have to continually update their competencies and awarenesses. However constantly paying the cost of continual improvements avoids paying the much greater costs of crisis management. Actors must be rewarded for bringing problems to the attention of those whose job it is to deal with them. At present they are more likely to be punished for doing so. Thus the phrase, 'stoning the messenger'. In this way the organization will be able to draw on every member's experience and skill.

Otherwise a vicious cycle sets in whereby the few individuals who 'own up' to having problems appear to be the only ones having problems. They can appear incompetent, given the impression that no-one else is having problems. They may be patronizingly offered 'help' in overcoming their problems, their inadequacies or incompetencies.

In the presence of a 'culture of denial', actors will seek solace in private complaining amongst colleagues and friends. The odd actor who does attempt to change this culture is inevitably mobbed, victimized, and 'crucified'. Others learn of such things happening, and are motivated even more to keep problems to themselves. The problem continues to be that there are no problems.

Every new participant becomes socialized into a 'culture of denial'. Those who don't 'bend' to the 'informal' work practices learn just how nasty and vicious humans can be. They are victimized and mobbed out of the organization. They will become 'examples' to every other participant in the organization, new and old, of what not to do. The violence inflicted upon them will be a clear message to anyone considering challenging the 'culture of denial'.

Human resource managers and other social engineers take note

In a recent BBC interview, Ian Blair, the former Police Commissioner of the U.K up until 2005, commented that 'people who don't make mistakes, don't make anything'. He had been replaced in his job for political reasons. Accused of having made a lot of mistakes, he reminded the interviewer of what I have been arguing for decades. In the public service people are rewarded for doing nothing. As long as they don't make mistakes they claim to be competent. In reality they are incompetent. Only people who try out new things produce any innovation and improvement. Mistakes are an inevitable part of this process of 'hit and miss'. Therefore anyone who has not notched up a few mistakes is unlikely to have achieved anything at all. Life is not about avoiding making mistakes, but learning from your own mistakes. And even better, from other's mistakes. Of course this plays on the wisest and holiest of all sayings, 'To err is human, to forgive is divine.' I would say that to err is creative. To err is Genius.

The failure to recognize problems, or to respond appropriately to them by implementing innovations, is potentially the greatest source of stress and de-motivation in an organization or society. Often the result of non-validated grievances is sabotage and poor 'half-assed' performance. However, management cannot, implicitly, define the poor performance or problems experienced as sabotage or poor motivation. That would be to define poor performance as the result of grievances, and hence their own poor management.

Management will find other excuses to explain the poor productivity and performance of workers. Often they will simply, insultingly, claim that workers are, per se, inherently lazy, and that management need to 'crack down' on them. Memos will be issued but not acted on. Maybe training seminars will take place, and management will learn a new set of phrases to describe the same old behaviors. Nothing much will change, just window dressing and impression management. Eventually some competitor who has instituted a culture of innovation and openness to problems will put them out of business.

If it is a government monopoly, it will just lurch from one crisis to another, claiming external reasons for its problems, never learning to take responsibility, never doing anything of substance to improve its organizational culture. The problems will always be projected as coming from somewhere else. Either not enough resourcing, not enough pay to 'attract' the best management (all the while the current management 'victimize' any promising talent that by sheer chance emerges within their own ranks, or enters from the outside), or 'the economy' or 'brain drain', or 'no-one understands how hard it is to manage'. The list of excuses is endless. However never, ever, does the management take any responsibility or hold itself accountable. No, there are no problems, there!

This applies as equally to vandalization of public places and social apathy, as it does to employee productivity, absenteeism, and motivation.

Changing the organisational ethos to get the best of both worlds

Managers should be evaluated on what they did not do, as much as by what they did. Just playing it safe, making no mistakes, and 'managing' should not be enough. We should evaluate what management failed to do. This is the true definition of 'failure'. Making lots of mistakes is in itself no failure. It is part of the process that is necessary for innovation, and success. The opportunities we miss out on because they are not willing to risk 'losing face' by making mistakes, are usually only highlighted when the competition do take chances, and do innovate. This is why they succeed.

This is the main reason we need competition, even though monopolies in principle are more efficient. If only we could compel people to act within a monopoly, as they are forced to act under conditions of competition. We must encourage 'internal' competition'. As part of this we must encourage and reward 'whistle-blowers'. They perform the task that is normally performed by the competition. If we change our organizational ethos, we could enjoy the efficiencies, and therefore resource and cost savings of monopolies, along with the innovation associated with true competition.

Professionals always resist the regulation of their professions

Professionals such as pilots and surgeons resisted regulation. It was forced upon them. They argued that it was unnecessary, as they could regulate themselves. Investigations into a high number of air crashes revealed human error to be to blame. Pilots argued against the introduction of safety protocols. These protocols required that every action of the pilot be repeated or checked by the co-pilot. Analysts developed standardized preflight and in-flight checks that would reduce human error. Since the introduction of these protocols flight safety has improved greatly.

Human error on the part of surgeons is accountable for a great deal of unnecessary death and suffering. Surgeons of course resist being regulated. They are the supreme professionals. They resisted the introduction of protocols, until insurance company premiums for malpractice forced them to reconsider. It was less the human suffering they produced than the accountability the insurance companies and courts held them to that swayed them. Hundreds of thousands of patients each year have had the wrong parts of their bodies operated on. Tens of thousands of people have been operated on after being mistaken for other people.

Simple, common-sense recommendations had been made to surgeons that they should mark the area to be operated on, and to ask the patient for their name and birth-date before an operation, to avoid such incidents. The surgeons derided such ideas as too pedantic. They insisted that they themselves were professionals. Like the pilots, they considered that no-one had a right to question their competence. Only other people made mistakes! It is typical human arrogance and defensiveness to deny the need to regulate their behavior, whether professional or 'private'.

It might surprise you that many surgeons used to consider hand washing to be redundant. Most of the bacteria that you will be exposed to during your life will be in the form of small particles of dead skin that rub off against a person's clothing, and then become part of the dust we all breathe in and come into contact with. Your skin is the habitat of bacteria. You would be shocked to know what life grows on your skin, and uses you as a habitat.

I am perhaps conditioned to be appalled when someone doesn't wash their hands after going to the toilet. However it is in fact only recently, in response to the evolution of super bugs, viruses and bacteria immune to even our strongest antibiotics, that many hospitals cracked down on doctors who failed to wash their hands before and after consulting with patients.

Several years ago the California Medical Association did a study which revealed that over 100,000 people die in the United States from antibiotic resistant organisms acquired only in hospitals. In fact, according to a study published in the New England Journal of Medicine, 36% of all patients in a university hospital were suffering from iatrogenic medical conditions, that is, medical conditions they got as a result of their hospital treatment.

Measures such as alcohol based hand washes between each consultation have apparently reduced the incidence of in-hospital exposure and illness significantly. Many of the Doctors were resistant to the ideas, and had to be won over and finally coerced into compliance with basic hygiene principles.

TROONATNOOR ON EVOLUTION

200,000 years

Life is said to be 4 Billion years old. We are only 200,000 years old. Blue-green algae was the first organism to use sunlight to produce energy. Before this organisms were dependent on volcanic heat. In other words Eden was the equivalent of the biblical hell. It was plants that produced the first atmospheric oxygen. They changed the atmosphere, making life possible for animals like us. 70% of our oxygen now comes from blue-green algae in the ocean. Cyno-bacteria evolved into plants and then trees. Plants transform solar energy into vegetable matter. When plants die, they decompose to form humus, and ultimately soil. Less than 10,000 years ago agriculture emerged, producing the surpluses that made specialization possible, and which lead to the development of technology and civilization as we know it.

The evolution of the 'beneficiary classes'

Evolution is a passive, random process of interactions and outcomes. The sex-drive produces a population from which the environment, predators, and intra-species competition for resources and mates, filter out the less adapted. Thus the process is known as negative selection. The outcome of this passive process is a direction towards greater sophistication. This outcome emerges without any intention, plan, design, purpose, or designer. Intelligence and other 'mental' talents have proven more valuable than physical strength for humans, and hence over time humanity has evolved a subspecies of more intelligent, talented humans who today form the 'beneficiary classes'.

Originally they translated their superior military power into land and slave ownership.

Later as society became more sophisticated, there emerged alternative ways to exercise superior talents and intelligences, and accumulate wealth, power, and privilege. Today many people have inherited wealth without ever having demonstrated any superiority whatsoever. They simply benefit from the achievements of their ancestors.

We may be the new tool, rather than the end, of evolution

Our anthropocentrism is a form of masturbation. We delude ourselves that we are 'the paragon of animals', the perfection of evolution. We imagine we are actually the 'goal' of evolution. This parallels the socialist myth of communism as 'the end of history'. However this is a delusional fallacy. It is an act of self-aggrandizement. Evolution is an open-ended process. It has no 'goal', and no end. We are sure to be replaced by a more adapted organism. We may be its ancestor, or it may evolve from some other species. Alternatively, we may become the new tool of evolution, and manufacture this new species. This would represent a move from negative selection, to positive selection.

Synergy

A synergistic transaction or relationship is one that benefits all the participants, active and passive. A synergy emerges by pure random chance. It can be a one off transaction, or a series of transactions. It can endure over a long series of interactions. Teleological functionalists present synergies as 'evidence' of intelligent design'. However most synergies exclude many referents from the calculations of costs and benefits. Different actors in an interaction or transaction will experience that interaction differently.

The slave owner defines slavery as a win-win. They imagine the slave is better off in their service, than wandering free in their tribal village. The zoo visitor imagines the animals are better off in the safe zoo, well fed, protected, and cared for, rather than taking their chances in the wild. Plato and the priests imagine we benefit from their 'noble' lies. Car manufactures and owners imagine their cars represent freedom. Of course 1.2 million deaths per year from car accidents might raise some doubts.

Predator and prey can be seen to exist in a synergistic relationships. Predators allow prey to enjoy sex and reproduction without suffering from over-population. Wars are synergistic in the same way for humans. Male's desire for sex and female's desire for children can be seen to be a synergy. All ecosystems show some level of synergy, from a holistic level. However the illusion of synergy evaporates at the level of the individual, the only participant or referent in our calculation of interests that can actually experience anything. At the level of the individual we usually have winners and losers in most of the transactions we define as synergistic.

The closest approximation we get to synergy is between parents and children. The parents feel satisfaction from the benefits they can provide their reproductions. People tend to feel this satisfaction exclusively for their own reproductions. This 'love' is thus the equivalent of 'self-love'. Those children with parents who have this feeling tend to survive and reproduce, and to reproduce this feeling. Over millions of years the entire population of these animals could be expected to exhibit this quality. Only because those who did not were more likely to go extinct. No mystery there.

There is much less synergy in the real world than the intelligent designers wish to imagine. They simply stop at a certain level of composition at which the greatest level of synergy appears to exist. They manage to overlook the real, chronic conflict, competition, and suffering that is endemic to all systems of interactions. They focus on the apparent benefits participants accrue from the relationships they focus on. Usually they simply focus on the benefits 'they' accrue from the system of relations. Thus they can believe in an intelligent designer, a creator, a personal and benevolent god.

I wonder if there really is any synergy between humans and mosquitoes. We know that birds and insects pollinate plants, and transport seeds. We realize that if we eliminated some insects that we don't like, or which can be dangerous, that the consequences might be the loss of other animals and plants we find valuable. Flies lay their eggs in dead animals and the maggots eat up the dead flesh. Without flies and other carrion eaters, the world would be covered with rotting corpses. But I wonder if we could eliminate some pesky creatures without negative consequences.

Each orchid appears to have its insect equivalent. It has the same form as the female in that species. Thus the male insect 'mates' with the orchid. It carries off the orchid's pollen to the next orchid that it 'mates' with. The stamen inside a flower is the equivalent of a phallus or penis. The flower form is the equivalent of a vagina. Thus all plants are hermaphroditic. They need some 'vector' to carry pollen from one flower to another. Originally there was probably a very crude match between the form of the female insect, and the flower. However over billions of years, those plants with flowers most closely resembling the female insects enjoyed an advantage over those that less closely resembled the female insects. Thus over each generation a closer 'convergence' between the form of the flower and the female insect emerged. Alternatively it was pure coincidental that at some stage in each organism's evolution this match occurred.

The true nature of 'function' as an epiphenomenal synergistic relationship, and virtual 'morality'

Functions are at one level purely coincidental. However as they tend to provide mutual advantages, facilitating survival and reproduction, they will, intuitively, tend to accumulate. In this way they are predictable outcomes of evolution. They are what Germans would call 'vorprogrammiert', pre-programmed.

Limited resources, even the 'territorial instinct', produces competition, which produces an environment in which random mutations compete, and more 'adapted' ones accumulate. In this sense 'function' is 'retrospectively' pre-programmed in the sense of being probable. Synergy provides a relational functionality between members of species and different species. As these synergies provide mutually adaptive advantages to the relating parties, they are also likely to accumulate and become dominant relational forms. In this way the process of evolution itself has an intrinsic predilection for producing both function and synergy.

Function and synergy are purely reflexive and relational. Our human ways of experiencing and thinking have produced concepts of 'function' and 'synergy' which are active and planned and reinforce lots of anthropocentric notions of meaning and purpose and a 'creator' or god.

The universe is a-moral on one level, but also potentially has a predisposition towards virtual-morality. Self-interest is the prime motivating force for any sentient being. However holistically enlightened self-interest produces the mindset of holistic collective self-interest, which approximates, in its operationalization, something close to moral intention, or 'virtual' morality.

Our legal codes, which people often refer to misleadingly as moral codes, are based on pure self-interest that is enlightened to some degree by an awareness of the costs of anarchy. This is what Hobbes called the social contract. It emerges from what he called 'the war of all against all', as everyone sees that it is in their own interests to have such laws. Even if we disagree with particular laws, we accept them as part of a larger package of 'law and order' which we consider to be in our interests to support and maintain.

To be more precise they are recognized by the dominant hegemonic elites as being in their own narrow collective interests. They impose these laws upon the wider community both explicitly through the use of force, and more subtly, through their 'hegemonic' institutions and definitions. However they resonate enough with the general Public's sense of self-interest to be more or less synergistic. Remember slave owners aspired to slave ownership. The worker aspires to own capital. The exploited in one advanced economy take advantage of their relatively superior inheritance vis a vis less developed economies. Everyone wants the property they have to be protected by law.

Always remember the Ten Commandments only applied internally among the Jews.

Externally, Moses promoted murder, rape, enslavement, genocide, and culture-cide. The 10 (or how many there might have originally been) commandments were no universal moral code, they were merely rules meant to regulate the internal affairs of a people, to make them more capable of destroying and enslaving other peoples.

While it is true that some members and potentially even some leaders of religious orders have enlightened intentions, the religious orders themselves have no moral character at all. Every god ever produced by any society has promoted murder, rape, slavery, and exploitation. Every religion, has persecuted those of its members who actually espoused 'moral' philosophies. Jesus and Buddha and Socrates were all persecuted and annihilated by their contemporary religious and social orders.

Synergy and relational functionality, when they emerge, will tend to reproduce themselves and accumulate in both internal systems of relations, that is, organisms, and external systems of relations, that is, ecosystems and social systems.

All behaviors are essentially accumulated instincts. Instinctive behaviors accumulate like any other genetic characteristic if they produce adaptive functionality and competitive advantage. The behavioral instinct of killing potential competitors can be functional or dysfunctional, depending on the holistic circumstances. Exploiting

members of your own social group with 'inferior' inheritances can be functional or dysfunctional, depending on the holistic circumstances.

Holistically enlightened self-interest would produce the recognition that for most of us our individual interests are more or less shared and are best served by being addressed in a collective manner. Of course the privileged minorities' narrow collective interests are 'enlightened' with regard to their own narrow membership and situation. They benefit from the individual pursuit of self-interest, as they have more or less inherited a situation of advantage vis a vis the general population.

They are acting no more or less morally than the social democrat in pursuing their own interests. By pure coincidence, morally speaking, the Social Democrat's interests merely coincide with the more general interests. The privileged will seek to mystify the general population as to what is in their interests. They are behaving no more or less morally than the social democrat, or the social prophet, the 'moral' philosopher.

It remains to be tested, in the competitive arena of evolution, as to whether my Protocols can produce enough critical mass to produce a community which can provide more benefits and less costs than the current ones, and therefore prove itself more adapted than the conventional ones. If it can do this, it might become a more competitive model than the traditional models of social interactions, institutions, definitions, and relationships, and come to dominate this planet as the dominant model of human interaction.

The EP model is no more or less moral per se than any other model in terms of being no more or less motivated by egoistic self-interest. However its outcomes would approximate those that a moral universe might produce. There is no moral intention as such, just the potential for holistically enlightened self-interest to dominate our ways of defining and relating, our reflexive definitions and systems of relations. For the majority of sentient beings, holistically enlightened self-interest will produce an identification of individual egoistic interests with the collective interests or common good. This identification has the potential to produce outcomes which more or less approximate what a moral universe would be expected to produce.

Species are not things

A thing will only survive and reproduce if it has properties complementary to its environment. Of course there is an iterative relationship to 'environment' in the sense that the thing, by existing, has an impact on the environment. It is a part of every other thing's environment.

We must be careful to consider the concept of 'environment' holistically, to define the thing and its environment as interacting upon each other to produce a whole. The thing may change the course of the river it falls into, as much as it is eroded by that same flow of water. A tree both consumes minerals and produces organic matter. It consumes organic matter and produces it. It becomes a part of its environment.

Animals use the resources of their own bodies and their wider environment to suit their needs. They 'learn' to exploit observed interaction-outcome sets to satisfy their needs. They 'change' their environments as much as they can to suit themselves. Every participant in an interaction forms a part of that whole interaction 'event'. Every part of a system is iteratively a part of the whole. Every individual thing is collectively a part of every other individual thing's 'environment'.

There is no evidence that individuals develop traits favorable to survival and reproduction, only that species do. However a 'species' is a concept, not a thing. The mystification intrinsic to the language of evolution is the confusion of a concept with a thing. We tend to identify certain 'things' as similar, and then talk about 'similar' sorts of things, or processes, being present over space-time. We say that something has 'endured'. It has maintained some degree of 'it-ness' or integrity as an identifiable, persistent type of thing. The thing could be an organism, a process, or a set of processes.

What we identify as a species is scientifically arbitrary, in that we select particular criteria for inclusion and exclusion that are not necessarily compelling. This is how we define the species as successfully adapting to its changing environment, by itself changing. In this sense, we arbitrarily identify species as persisting over time by defining certain properties as essential, necessary, or sufficient to defining the species as the same thing over time. Unless perfect clones are reproduced, then the species is not stable over time, and it is only a function of the language used that the species has survived.

What has survived, is the offspring of the previous offspring. We define the previous offspring as of the same species if members of this so-defined group could, theoretically, reproduce with the earlier members of the 'species'. A species is a concept. This conceptual species is not a thing per se. It is just a concept. We have to be pedantic to avoid unintentional confusion or deliberate mystification.

To solve the riddle about what came first, the chicken or the egg, we can say that if we trace the evolution of chickens back in time, we will be able to find the animal that laid an egg from which the first 'chicken' emerged. The definition of 'species' is a definition dependent on 'exclusivity'. The egg produced a chicken, but the animal that laid it wasn't necessarily a chicken. So the egg, as intuition would suggest, came before the 'chicken, if any oedipal ambitions on the part of that chicken were not capable of producing offspring. The chicken that emerged from the egg would thus be a different species from the animal that laid the egg.

The term 'species' defines an animal or plant as different to all the other animals it cannot reproduce with. The property of significance that the categorization 'species' is interested in is the ability to reproduce. So a species contains, as a conceptual category, types of animals, or plants, similar in that they can reproduce with each other, and hence different from all those animals, or plants, it cannot reproduce with.

A species doesn't exist. Only individuals do. Only individuals can survive and reproduce. We define all those individuals that can, by interacting with each other, reproduce, as a species. However a 'species' is merely a category, rather than a thing. Only individuals can reproduce. If the things produced can reproduce with the things that produced them, then they are of the same 'species'. If not, they are considered a 'new' or 'different' species.

At some point in the evolution of a particular type of thing, the thing that is produced by it will exhibit mutations of a degree that will prevent it from being able to reproduce with the thing that produced it. The previous

thing will continue re-producing things like itself, and the mutation will go on, if it has inherited properties that make it adapted to its environment, to reproduce itself. There will then be two species. One of the ancestors of one of the species produced the ancestor/s of the other species. This process can continue, until a multitude of species exists side by side.

The same species can contain great diversity of properties, such as today can be seen among dogs. In this case if any particular properties prove more advantageous than others, the 'species' itself can change in its composition and properties. So the 'species' can lose members and diversity. Over time the same species can, as a conceptual group, adapt. In this case the newest 'breeds' will still be able to reproduce with the 'older' breeds.

If they are in competition for resources of any kind, then the species that is more adapted to the environment, and this competitive situation which constitutes a property of this environment, will survive at the expense of the other. We will then have fewer species present in the same space-time. Within a species, those more adapted will reproduce and the less adapted ones won't. There will then be a reduction in diversity within the species.

At any particular moment in space time a sort of moving balance will exist, a sort of 'temporary' harmony or balance between the species. Enough prey will be produced to support the population of predators. The population of prey will continue to outgrow the population of predators. Some 'synergies' will emerge also, in which the species benefit from the existence of other species.

It is a moving balance. When predators increase in numbers they must compete for prey. The weaker predators 'lose' this contest. Any mutations among the prey that make them more difficult targets for the predators will mean that their offspring increase at the same time as their 'cousins' offspring are 'preyed' into extinction. The more adapted prey and predators will continue to reproduce into space-time, as the less adapted ones fade into extinction, or find their own 'niches' or 'trades'.

The concept of adaptation popularly formulated by the popular language culture promotes a harmonious, ordered, therefore planned, deliberate, or 'created', view of nature. However in reality evolution is based on the negative of death, negative selection, failure.

The only 'positive' element of evolution is the accumulation of mutations, the constant addition of new mutations to the current inheritance of mutations, producing increasing diversity, complexity and sophistication. This is also the only positive direction present in evolution. It is, however, passive rather than active.

Evolution has no intentions, moral or otherwise

Most of us accept evolution in general, without fully understanding how much evolution can really explain. Because we have no basic problem with the concept we fail to investigate it further. This is unfortunate, as evolution has a huge explanatory power which we can employ, once we deeply comprehend it. When you have done so, you won't need to reconcile evolution with religion. You simply won't need religion to explain anything. Gods have become redundant, irrelevant, unnecessary.

I myself formulated most of my 'scientific' arguments as an ancient Greek would have, with no real knowledge of chemistry, physics, or biology. Of course many of the concepts and understandings of modern science must have filtered down to me through the popular culture. In principle, however, my experiences and conclusions have been the result of intensive interrogation at an abstract level. This has the advantage that I have formulated all of my ideas in fairly normal language. I didn't have any other language at my disposal! As in the case of the ancient Greeks, many of my ideas appear to have been vindicated by modern science.

The 'intuitive' ability to 'smell' out potential problems within arguments seems to be a common experience among the greatest minds of history. Often intuition, 'mind experiments', and pure reason precede the technical ability to test ideas. These new ideas often contradict current hegemonic models or paradigms of the world. Often they are too abstract and 'counter-intuitive' in relation to the current conventional ways of seeing the world. Many of these apparent problems resolve themselves naturally as technical means improve and new observations can be made. Apparent paradoxes dissolve as our understanding of the nature of reality improves.

And we no longer feel any necessity to 'reconcile' compelling arguments and observations with the conventional tenets of faith, the hegemonic dogmas. They simply become irrelevant. They only continue to be reproduced for affective, emotional, or political reasons. They provide emotional benefits for the masses, and material benefits for the dominant hegemonic beneficiary classes.

Often the popular cultures' understandings of scientific arguments are far from accurate or precise. Many people feel they understand things that they actually don't. This is not aided by the failure of many scientists to pay attention to the language they use and how they use it. Even Authors such as Murray Gell-Mann in 'The Quark and the Jaguar', and Richard Dawkins in 'The Blind Watchmaker, however rigorous and precise they are generally, commit the cardinal sin of expressing passive processes with active language, and hence contradicting the very core of the message they are seeking to communicate. In fact, this has been the bane of much discussion concerning evolution.

Precisely comprehending the nature of evolution is the key to understanding The Realities Of Our Nature, And The Nature Of Our Realities. I only became aware of the full power of the concepts of evolution when reading Gell-Mann, and Dawkins, along with 'The Shadows of the mind', by Roger Penrose. None of these authors contradicted anything that I had, in my own naive and 'ancient-Greek' way, concluded, unaided by a 'hard' scientific education. However, they revealed to me that it was possible to explain, in a concrete way, things that I had assumed could only be explained at an abstract level, if at all.

A thorough and precise comprehension of the processes of evolution can make the nature of our realities comprehensible, without resort to any vague, unclear, mystical, or speculative theories.

The clarity I refer to only arises when precision is attained. The lack of this precision provides a fertile ground for misunderstandings and deliberate specious sophistry on the part of those with ulterior motives and secret agendas, usually of a dogmatic religious or mystical nature. What I now seek to do is to explain evolution using the passive language required to avoid 'muddled' thinking on the subject.

You will note that I have avoided using the term 'creation' throughout my discussions. It is imprecise and damaging to a precise comprehension of the processes it refers to. In the same way that 'produce' avoids all the dangers of functionalism and creationism, passive language must always be used when referring to the processes of evolution. Evolution is a passive process, not an active one. What do I mean? Exactly the same thing I have argued

throughout this book. Interactions produce outcomes. The interactions are not 'motivated' or 'deliberate' or 'intended'. The interactions are the result of the forces of nature interacting. Any particular outcome or product has no greater or lesser 'value' to the forces of nature. In fact nature places no 'value' on any particular state. The forces of nature do not obey any 'moral' laws. They make no 'moral' judgments.

They have no 'moral' interests. No particular outcome or state is 'preferable' to nature. No particular outcome or state is 'sought', planned or designed.

However the language formulations typically used in reference to the processes of evolution do imply design, planning, preferences, and objectives on the part of evolution itself. As such it anthropomorphizes evolution as an 'intelligent designer' in the same way that theists anthropomorphize the laws of nature as 'gods'. It merely replaces a personal, planning, and considerate god, with a personal, planning, and considerate process.

Function follows form

When you say that an animal has eyes to see, you imply that the eyes were produced with the intention of favoring the animal with sight. When you say an instinct exists to serve a purpose, to benefit the organism in some way, ensuring its survival and reproduction, you are committing the same functionalist error. A more precise language formulation avoids such errors. An organism can see because it has eyes. All form precedes function. Function follows form.

Evolution binges, randomly 'brainstorming' billions of forms without any intention, purpose, or regard for any functionality. These forms interact within an individual organism, within interactions between organisms, within interactions between species, and within interactions between species and the larger environment. The level of composition we often adopt when looking at how such systems interact and behave is that of the ecosystem. Ecosystems themselves interact with each other, with other larger systems, which form a larger whole. It is these interactions which determine whether a form is adapted to provide its owner with some value in terms of 'functionality'.

The functionality or otherwise of a form emerges reflexively from its holistic context. A form is only functional or otherwise in relation to the rest of the whole it exists within. Gills are functional if you have lungs, and live under water. Eyes are functional only in the context of light, and a visual cortex. Deception is functional in the context of an opportunistically competitive environment. The instinct for religion is functional for the beneficiaries of it. Depending on the level of composition and referent you adopt, the context a form is defined within, a particular form or instinct may be functional or dysfunctional.

Thus functionality refers to the reflexive convergence between randomly generated forms, and the holistic environment, the context, they interact with. Functionality and dysfunctionality are merely passive outcomes of the interactions among forms and instincts. The individual form and instinct interacts with all the other forms and instincts in its immediate and wider environment. It is this environment, this holistic context, which defines a particular form as functional or otherwise. In a competitive environment defined by relative scarcity of the resources required for survival and, more importantly, reproduction, only those forms that prove the most convergent with their environment will be reproduced.

Each part, form or instinct constitutes a part of the environment of every other part, form, or instinct. These parts and their interactions together constitute the whole. Thus the whole is the sum of the parts and their interactions. Every part of the must be at some level reflexively convergent with every other part. Any particular form or instinct must be convergent or compatible with the 'whole minus it' which constitutes its environment. This environment selects for convergence. A form or instinct that proves to have no convergence and therefore no functionality will reduce the convergence of the organism that possesses this form or instinct with its environment.

This organism will face a competitive disadvantage Vis a Vis those more convergent organisms with their more convergent forms and instincts. If the competition is strong, the organism will fail to reproduce. In this way its environment has 'negatively selected' it out of the gene pool, and the pool of forms and instincts. In a less competitive environment organisms may reproduce despite many of their forms and instincts being non-convergent.

Thus it is the interactive environment of any form or instinct that determines whether it is convergent, and thus functional, or not. Functionality is not an intrinsic quality of a form or instinct itself. Function, like meaning, is reflexive. It is a product of the relationships between things. Thus to be precise, it is relationships which define function, rather than form.

Remember the context of function is holistic. Changes in any part of the whole represent a change in this context. This means that any mutation, any change in any part of the entire system of interacting forms and instincts, can change the status of any form in terms of its functionality. The instinct for aggression which has proven functional as a means of negative selection can suddenly become dysfunctional in the context of weapons capable of destroying the entire eco-system, and life per se.

We project preferences upon evolution, ascribing it intentions

The popular language culture formulation follows that famous line of Aristotle, 'form follows function'. However function implies intention, which can only exist in the mind of a designer. However evolution has no preferences. It has no intentions. When we ascribe functionality to a form, we are ascribing intentions and preferences to a passive, indifferent process. We are making unnecessary, redundant, and completely unwarranted assumptions. When we do all this we fall into the typical errors of functionalists and creationists.

Nothing in nature, no product of evolution, is intended to serve a function. The concept function emerges only in the minds of some of evolution's products, most notably man, but also dam-building and river-diverting, fish-farming beavers, nest-building birds, hive and mound building, and aphid-farming insects, and camouflaging crabs. Such sentient beings adapt the forms they have inherited to satisfy their inherited desires. Monkeys and sea otters adapt external things as tools, to enhance their own inherited faculties and powers.

Humans, beavers, birds, and insects intentionally produce forms with functions in mind. Their dams, nests, mounds, and hives serve an intended purpose. Man continues this behavior in designing and producing other technologies which compensate for its lack of wings, gills, and other 'forms' which other animals have inherited in their D.N.A. Our inherited desires produce our will. Our will determines our intentions.

We produce particular forms with these intentions in mind, to serve particular purposes, such as flight and scuba-diving. They are thus an extension of the process of evolution. But it is only in this sense, through us as its agents, that evolution can be said to have any intentions. We are the 'intelligent designers'. Humans, like beavers, birds, monkeys, and insects, are the only intelligent designers within the process of evolution.

While it may be comforting to imagine that we have a special place in the universe, that it was in fact created for us, with our wellbeing in mind, there is no compelling argument to suggest this is in fact the case. There is thus no need to fear the 'fates worse than death' that religion has always threatened us with. The simplest way to disabuse yourself of such fears and the notions they derive from, is to read 'Religion'.

Let us be clear that evolution is a passive process. Evolution is not guided by any ambitions or objectives, least not any 'moral' ones. There is no 'moral' intention in the universe, no truly 'moral' impulse. What Hume calls our 'moral sentiments' are merely derivative of our self-interests. Our concern for 'others' is always a derivative of our concern for our own interests. I use the term 'moral behavior, which is a species of holistically enlightened self-interest. We have no record of any community defined by moral intention ever having existed. If one ever had emerged, it would have suffered from such a competitive disadvantage that it would have soon become extinct.

History is full of the crucifixions of those carriers of a higher morality, those 'moral' philosophers, those prophets of 'moral' intention. Moral behavior is merely practical in nature, rather than 'moral' as such. Morality is never ascribed to as a value in itself. Morality is merely instrumental. Moses, the model for Adolf Hitler, is an example of this. Moses defined the law as being limited to the Jews. Don't kill your fellow Jews. This is practical. By all means kill, rape, and enslave anyone who isn't Jewish. This is practical.

Moral behavior is instrumental and self-referential. But while the intentions are not 'moral', the outcomes can be. Holistically enlightened self-interest can allow for greater consideration of the interests of others, even if it has itself, its own interests, as its ultimate referent. So long as the self recognizes that it is in its own interests to consider the interests of others and the state of its environment, its behavior can begin to approximate behavior similar to, and consistent with, the behavior that would be exhibited by an organism motivated by true moral intention.

Enlightened holistic reasoning represents a sort of convergence towards the ideal of moral intention. The outcomes can be similar, even though the primary motivations are different. All that is required is the holistic enlightenment of all members of society.

To be certain, no god has ever been produced by the human species which in fact behaves in a truly 'moral' way, or which in fact subscribes to, or promotes, moral intention. They were all created in our own, a-moral, moral

behavioral, image. They all justify and even encourage the dispossession, murder, rape, and enslavement of those not belonging to the god's 'chosen people'. All their 'moral' codes are completely 'exclusive'. See 'Religion' and 'Convergences' for details.

The ingredients of evolution

The ingredients of evolution are huge spans of time (up to 4 billion years in the case of our species), random mutation of genes (from radiation, organic compounds, and faulty re-production of genetic codes), their reproduction and accumulation, and competition due to relative scarcity which produces a direction towards sophistication and complexity via negative selection.

The 'direction' towards greater sophistication and complexity observable in evolution is devoid of any value judgments or intentions. The huge problem facing us as humans is that we are presented with a planet full of complex and sophisticated organisms and ecosystems, all of which are defined by some degree of 'synergy'. We are duly impressed and amazed by organs such as eyes and immune systems. We are confronted with more or less 'finished' products of great sophistication, complexity, and functionality. We are grateful to have eyes to see with, as we can see lots of beautiful and satisfying things. It is as if we have eyes to see with. They are such complex and sophisticated systems that they cannot help but suggest to us that something must have designed them.

Richard Dawkins, in 'The Blind Watchmaker' shows how evolution can explain the presence of complexity, sophistication, apparent functionality, and even relative synergy. He does, unfortunately, on page 105 for example, inadvertently contradict his own messages, for instance, by stating that an anteater... 'has a long thin snout for poking into ants nests'. Even the best scientists fall into the popular language culture traps! The movie Water-world highlights popular misconceptions regarding evolution. In the movie some humans have evolved gills behind their ears in response to their new environment. This would require that some humans already, today, had the basis for gills in their genetic make-up.

Evolutionary hit and miss, binge and purge, brainstorming

Life 'binges' or 'brainstorms' a massive population of things. Random mutations increase diversity within this population. Imagine an organization that encouraged its millions of members to 'brainstorm' ideas without any critical evaluation of them. From among the billions of ideas produced, management selected the few 'brilliant' ones. The process was secret. The ideas that brilliant ideas were presented to the public, who were appropriately amazed. People not aware of the entire process might wonder at the ingenuity of the ideas finally 'selected', having no idea about the large number of 'stupid' or 'useless' ideas that the brainstorming process had generated. They will be amazed at how clever the presenters must be to have come up with such great ideas. The 'misses' are not presented. Only the 'hits' are. It could appear that these people are infallible geniuses. They come up with such fantastically useful ideas.

Over thousands of years the 'good' ideas accumulate. The 'hits' accumulate. Technologies develop and combine with each other to produce machines and processes of great sophistication and complexity. Technology develops bit by bit from the simple to the more and more complex and sophisticated. We have documented histories of the development of our technologies over thousands of years, so we can comprehend how the current technologies emerged. We are not obliged to refer to any sort of magical or mystical explanations to explain how our computers work.

In actual fact most of us are happy just to use computers, without needing to be able to explain how they work and how they emerged. We just accept that the technologies developed over time. The 'misses', the failed attempts along the way are forgotten as we are inherently interested in utility and value, rather than history. We tend to ascribe 'genius' to inventors, unaware of how 'hit and miss' the process of innovation really is. We imagine that inventors suddenly hit upon ideas in 'eureka moments'. We simply assume these 'geniuses' to possess an intelligence and 'creativity' far beyond mere mortals.

Gateway events

The moment we learned how to 'produce' fire, we were no longer be dependent on finding fire. We could produce fire at will. This would be considered to be a 'gateway event' by Dawkins, as it facilitated a wide range of other innovations. The one discovery of fire would have spurred on a mass of new innovations, including those in cooking, the smelting of metals, and steam power. These innovation would then open up new opportunities for new technologies with no obvious connection to the original discovery of how to produce fire.

This one simple technology has ultimately lead to thousands of complex ones. Once you get going, and build up momentum, new discoveries interact with old ones, and new technologies begin emerging at a faster rate. The whole process of technological development would appear miraculous to anyone without a comprehension of the development of technology over time, from an iteration between a disciplined process of trial and error, and chance observations.

Cumulative evolution

We all recognize that computers weren't just 'invented' in a 'single step'. This would be the equivalent of 'single step evolution'. The process was one of 'cumulative evolution'.

New ideas build on existing ones, new relationships are discovered, new patterns catch our attention, new uses are found for existing materials and processes. Many more ideas are rejected than accepted. Only the 'hits', the 'successes', accumulate, as they provide their possessor with benefits.

Even today some people still believe that science grows from the pure genius of particular scientists who deliberately seek out and find innovations, new inventions, by virtue of their genius. Few people recognize the true hit and miss nature of inquiry, and the innumerable 'misses' that lead to the few 'hits'. The same is true of any 'creative' process. We only see the hits. We can be forgiven for having a false picture of the 'creative' process.

When we look at a living organism we are rightly astounded by the integration of the parts into a functioning whole. We only see the result of a process. We can only vaguely imagine the innumerable interactions which produced the outcomes we today observe. We are the product of that process of evolution. We represent the accumulation of around 4 billion years of hits. The 'misses' cannot be observed. And so we cannot imagine how we got here. We are too complex and sophisticated to imagine that we might have emerged without the direction or guiding hand of some 'creator'.

This relates to the level of composition of time that is native to us humans. Our human time frames of reference are so small compared to that of evolution. Our beliefs to date were also reflexive of our lack of any alternative, compelling, and comprehensible explanation what we can observe.

This following discussion concerning the human eye and evolution is based on Richard Dawkins', 'The Blind Watchmaker'. The human eye and its functioning is a marvel of nature. It exhibits high levels of complexity and sophistication. Dawkins helps us imagine the earlier 'prototypes' which developed into the complex and sophisticated eye we see today. Dawkins reminds us that any set of cells which allowed a creature to recognize light and dark would provide it with some advantage over its fully 'blind' competitors. A creature passing in front of our creature would change the shade, and if the creature's response was to move towards prey, or away from predators, then it would have an advantage over its competition. It would survive and reproduce.

How do animals 'know' exactly what to do at the right time to ensure their survival and reproduction? Surely it is a sign of some great mystery? Surely it is inexplicable? Well actually the 'mystery' is merely a product of how we are looking at the situation. It is like the illusionists smoke and mirrors, the card-tricksters sleight of hand, and the priest's spin. You have to know where to look, and not allow yourself to be distracted, your attention directed where it cannot discover anything. In fact billions of different organisms with different instincts have been produced by random mutation. Those instincts and organisms that proved maladapted failed to survive and reproduce.

Only those organisms and instincts which were adapted managed to survive. Thus evolution is defined by passive correspondence or convergence, rather than 'intelligent design'. At any particular time and place, we are only likely to observe organisms and instincts that are relatively well adapted to the environment of their parents. And if they happen to be adapted to this current one too, then they will reproduce, providing more 'evolutionary fodder' for this process to continue with.

'Biological holistics' reminds us that every part of every part of every whole interacts to form the holistic environment within which each of these parts find themselves. Thus I am a part of your environment. My endocrine system is a part of the environment my brain finds itself in, as much as you, the weather, or the trees outside are.

When we talk about the reproduction of behavioral tendencies we have to clarify what we are talking about. Genes interact to produce phenotypes. The same genes can produce different phenotypes, based on embryology. The phenotype includes both the existence of light sensitive cells, and the behavioral tendency to respond to changes in light. The genes are reproduced, with both the light sensitive cells and behaviors, in the phenotype. Different and

similar phenotypes then become each other's living environments. They compete amongst each other for mates, resources, 'trades', and 'niches', and habitats. Each has to 'make a living' to survive and reproduce. Of course there is also the relationship between prey and predator.

The phenotype with the light sensitive cells and automatic behavioral tendency to respond to changes in light may enjoy an advantage over the other creatures. It may be a more successful hunter, and avoid predation. It may mate more prolifically than its competition, reproducing its advantages, and the population of its phenotype. If the characteristics provide it with a competitive advantage and represent 'adaptation' it will thrive, often at the expense of the others in its environment. Over time it will become dominant. Maybe it will predate other species to extinction. Perhaps it will elude its predators and they will die out also. But back to the point at hand.

The light sensitive cells provided an advantage. This is purely random. They may just as easily have represented a disadvantage. The creature's automatic tendency to move when shadows passed their 'light sensitive cells' may have made them easier targets for predators who otherwise would not have noticed them.

The phenotype, the twinned light sensitive cells and behavioral tendencies, was a result of random mutations in the cell. These occurred due to faults in the replication of the cell, radiation of some kind, or some other random environmental impact on the D.N.A. A particular strain of DNA may remain stable for millions of years, before a new random mutation occurs, resulting in these light sensitive cells becoming sensitive to certain narrow bandwidths of the electromagnetic spectrum, which we call color.

It may develop musculature that allows it to focus the cells, or the image produced by them. This might confer some advantages on the creature, or may not. If it does, it will have a competitive advantage over its competition for scarce resources, food, shelter, sunlight, water, and mates. It is more likely to survive and reproduce than its competitors.

The light sensitivity and color sensitivity will accumulate in the creature's offspring. Billions of years provide ample opportunities for further chance mutations to emerge and accumulate. What we see in the human eye is around 4 billion years of the accumulation of such 'random' mutations. Evolution depends on both accurate replication of genes, of D.N.A, and random mutation, often the result of faulty replication of genes.

The direction towards ever greater sophistication and complexity results from a relative scarcity of resources and mates which means that only the most competitive individuals within any particular species can survive and reproduce. This is what we call 'negative selection'. Hence while mutation is random, a direction emerges in favor of complexity and sophistication, which provides a competitive advantage in any competition. Thus the accumulation of particular random mutations is non-random.

Of course simple organisms often find their own niches. Less complex and sophisticated organism such as plankton survive as they are not in competition with the more complex and sophisticated ones. They have their own 'trades'. And to some extent within a species there are also a variety of trades. Those with the most favorable holistic inheritances take up the more desirable niches and trades. The society that emerges from evolution is itself sophisticated and complex.

This allows for a diversification of trades, with varying levels of satisfaction attached to each. At the 'top' of the pyramid we have the beneficiaries. At the bottom, we have people barely surviving from day to day, many enduring fates worse than death. In between we have a diversity of 'niches' and trades.

Like the camera developing from a pin hole in a box facing light sensitive 'film', into a Single Lens Reflex camera with variable lens, timing, aperture settings, zooms, and digital memory, the eye has accumulated greater sophistication and complexity over many 'generations'. Many other random mutations of the eye would have provided disadvantages, however we have no evidence of these 'misses' as there are no exemplars of these phenotypes around.

They would have become extinct because of these disadvantages. So we are left only with examples of phenotypes which provided benefits. A failure to recognize this level of composition bias can lead us to believe that the world was only ever populated by 'adapted' creatures with beneficial characteristics and living in synergistic

relationships with their environments. In this case we would be lead to believe that the human eye was the result of 'one step evolution', which is one step away from creationism.

Remember that the first cameras came as a result of some other random observation of how light behaves, and of light sensitive materials. It is only near the later stages of the exponential curve that the complex and sophisticated camera as we know it today, emerged. Consider that this process took a few hundred years. Even this process cannot be defined as 'deliberate' and 'planned', as that would assume that the first people working with photosensitive materials had a very real idea of what would come of their labor.

It would be to assume that they could in fact imagine first the pin-hole camera, then the brownie, and then the SLR camera, or even just the brownie, at the stage of the process at which they were, often unwittingly, contributing. As such it is even wrong to call it a process as such, and more correct to talk about stages in the 'history' of various, often unconnected developments which ultimately produced the SLR camera. At later stages in this history people applied the earlier discoveries in ways never imagined, foreseen, or 'intended' by the earlier inventors and scientists.

It would be a retrospective ascription to refer to them as having worked on the same 'project', towards the same 'goal', as they had no idea of how their individual innovations would accumulate over time to ultimately produce an SLR camera. There was no plan to design and build an SLR camera. The benefits of individual phenomena and technologies were combined at some point by people who made the necessary connections, who recognized the 'value' of particular relationships. By chance or 'mind experiment', they recognized that the various individual phenomena and technologies could be joined, to produce the whole with the functions we today call the SLR camera. The camera 'evolved' in a similar way to the eye. Of course we are using the camera as an analogy, and not an example.

I have read arguments asserting that everything that we make exists first as an idea. This sort of specious sophistry fails to recognize the history or evolution of manufactured products. No-one thought of fire before they 'discovered' fire. It was the observation of the effects of fire that lead to our idea of what fire might be useful for. The fire produced or inspired our adaptation of it to serve our purposes. The discovery of fire was a 'gateway event' that set up a chain of observations and applications of observed relationships which has evolved into our modern stove. We didn't form the idea of a stove, and then go about searching for ways to realize this idea.

No-one set out with the idea of a Single-Lens-Reflex camera when then stumbled upon photosensitive materials and the idea of pin-hole cameras. The digital SLR camera, like many other products, came into existence by accident, as a result, a consequence, an outcome, a product, of many unintended consequences or unforeseen applications of other unrelated, unconnected, processes or technologies.

An adhesive wouldn't adhere well enough. It was considered a 'failure'. However it inspired one employee of the company to invent 'stick-it' notepads. Innovation doesn't occur 'out of the blue' as a spontaneous idea. Technologies and techniques evolve over time through random occurrences that the disciplined and observant mind observes and applies in some innovative way. Most innovations are merely the adaptation of an existing technology to a new problem. The innovator simply uses an existing technology in a new way, one not foreseen by the original 'inventor'. So if you are going to start brainstorming ways to make lots of money, start with existing technologies, and imagine new ways of employing them.

Of course evolution is a process that works with the materials at hand. I earlier referred to interactions amongst primerties, producing propergents, which then interacted amongst themselves to define the new conditions of interactions. These went on to produce physical environments, and cultural environments. In my ancient-Greek way I was explaining evolution, with no real knowledge or direct consideration of the processes of evolution. For all intensive purposes though, the explanations are the same. We haven't really come further, but we have delved deeper.

Self-replication is the process making copies of yourself. Biological cells, given suitable environments, reproduce by cell division. During cell division, DNA is replicated. DNA is sexually transmitted via the combination

of sperm and ovum. Biological viruses can reproduce, but only by commandeering the reproductive machinery of the cells of other organisms, which they 'infect'. Computer viruses reproduce using the hardware and software already present on computers.

Dawkins explains how, via endo-symbiosis, mitochondria and chloroplasts which were possibly at earlier points in evolutionary history independent organisms in their own right, became integrated into a single 'co-operative' unit or cell. The mitochondria or chloroplasts effectively came to live inside eukaryotes, single cell organisms with a nucleus, DNA, and organelles, in a symbiotic, synergistic, relationship. Such cells could then reproduce themselves via mitosis. Cells and genes (DNA) at some point cooperated and produced organs and bodies. These bodies had competitive advantages over single genes and cells, and therefore came to dominate the evolutionary landscape.

As Dawkins illustrates, it is not just biological units that are self-replicating. Memes, 'units of culturally transmitted information' such as cultural customs, songs, dances, philosophies, religious dogmas, and so on, all replicate themselves using a host. They reproduce using the human mind and culture as their reproductive machinery, in the same way other viruses use a host organism's cells to replicate themselves.

Dawkins states that 'events flow from the properties of things'. This is another way of saying that 'function follows form'. He considers how pre-organic self-replication may have been the fore-runner and basis of later organic self-replication. He considers how clay's properties of 'stickiness' and 'tendency to 'slow down' the flow of rivers, produce accumulations of clay which further slow down the river increasing the chances of further particles of clay sticking to the deposits and accumulating. The properties of clay produce the conditions under which clay can build-up. In this sense the clay-logged bends in rivers reproduce themselves. Clay particles can be considered a form of 'seed' for further clay accumulations. This property of clay particles produces clay accumulations and their reproduction. Dawkins considers how organic materials may have 'piggy-backed' on such properties of clay in a symbiotic relationship.

Parthenogenesis is a form of self-replication that requires no external 'inputs'. If Jesus was of virgin birth then he would have been a girl. Parthenogenesis is common among lower plants and invertebrate animals, especially rotifers, aphids, ants, wasps, and bees.

A few kinds of amphibians, reptiles, and birds can also reproduce via parthenogenesis. One exemption to this rule are common honey bees. If their Queen's eggs are not fertilized, they produce male drones. In the case of aphids, those conceived in summer are the result of parthenogenesis and are all female, while some aphids conceived in autumn are male.

Replication is the force for reproduction, and hence cumulative evolution. For characteristics to accumulate, they have to be passed on from one generation to the next.

At each stage of replication new random mutations may be added to the present ones. During the replication or 'copying' process errors can occur (about 1% in 5 million according to Dawkins). Mutation can also occur due to the collisions of sub-atomic particles with the actual DNA itself that occur with exposure to radiation or some organic compounds.

As mutation is random, most mutations are disadvantageous to the organism that results, what we call 'birth defects'. It is important to note here that human behavior (determined by genes and phenotypes) often reproduces disadvantageous genes and their phenotypes. We allow people with all manner of diseases to reproduce and pass on the disease genes, and then artificially support the diseased offspring long enough for them to reproduce their diseases, and pass them on to future generations. In such a way we promote the accumulation of maladapted genotypes and phenotypes.

Dawkins refers to an interesting 'Roman arch analogy'. Once you have stones in place as an arch they will support themselves. This always fascinated me, the use of gravity to hold things up. When we come across such a stone arch, we could be forgiven for being puzzled. No matter how hard you try, you can't build an arch with the stones present. Of course you need to pile stones or soil under the arch, build up the arch, and then remove the

stones or soil, or use some wooden supports to hold the stones in place until you put the cap stone in place. You can then safely remove the supports and the rocks will hold themselves up, using the downward force of gravity. I suspect there is a deep message in this for us in relation to TROONATNOOR.

The analogy is used by Dawkins to indicate that many of the 'stepping stones' to the current world of DNA, sexual reproduction, even organic chemistry itself, may have disappeared, no more to be observed. Our inability to observe them denies us information concerning the many steps that lead to our world existing as it does. Their non-existence throws up some problems for scientists. They can only speculate about the mechanisms that lead to the emergence of the 'gateway' events that lead to the emergence of DNA and eventually humans. These processes or 'stepping stones' were the supports that allowed our current four letter C,T,A,G DNA and to emerge. We are left with the stone arch, without all the clues as to how it came to be. We don't get to see the scaffold, or the stone piles that were intermediate steps to the existence of the arch. There may have been intermediary steps that left no record of their existence.

Dawkins uses a neat example of self-organization. Remember self-organization is a fundamental prerequisite to organization per se, in the absence of some 'intention' or 'architect'. You may go to the beach and find that stones appear to have been 'organized' according to size. It may appear that someone has been going up and down the beach organizing the stones according to size. In fact the waves and stones have interacted according to their natures, without any intention. It is simply a fact that the same force will move the same sized stone the same distance. Different stones will be moved different distances, and will accumulate with like-sized stones. This anecdote is profound in terms of evolution and comprehending TROONATNOOR.

We are complex accumulations of behavioral tendencies and physical characteristics. One of the distinctive human behavioral tendencies is to be sensitive to patterns in the environment, to make abstract 'schemata' of the environment. Patterns refer to relationships and meanings. Humans tend towards seeking to define the meanings of things, by which I mean the relationships that exist between things. This tendency has served it well enough that it has survived and reproduced. It has managed its physical limitations by applying its 'meanings', its awareness of how things interact and relate, in the form of various technologies. These technologies include machines, methods, techniques, and forms of organization including social systems.

Behavioral instincts are a product of our genes as much as any other more obviously physiological trait. Where our instincts and other biological features are complementary and symbiotic, they provide the greatest competitive advantages. The value of vision and hearing are best realized when there are mechanisms in the 'brain' or nervous system to process the data they transmit, record it, and then compare it with previous sense impressions. These mechanisms facilitate the construction of patterns and correlations and therefore 'meanings'. It is through these mechanisms that we perceive, that we become aware of, the nature of the relationships between things, including TROONATNOOR.

While it is the symbiotic relationship between instincts and physical abilities that provides the greatest functional adaptation and therefore competitive advantage, it is more or less exclusively these types of phenotypes that we will get to observe. For this reason will be confronted by only these 'hits' of evolution, and by more or less exclusively 'symbiotic' relationships.

This could easily convince the naive, ignorant, or wishful thinker that a guiding force or entity must be at hand. Symbiosis is the most emotionally compelling phenomenon when it comes to deducing creationism or mysticism. Symbiosis, where characteristics or organisms exist in a mutually beneficial relationship, seem almost 'moral' in nature, almost how we want things to be, how we think they should be. However this apparent harmony' is merely a fallacy of composition. In any case the synergies that do exist are 'intuitive' once we understand the process of evolution. We should expect or anticipate the existence of such relationships in any of the products of evolution that we are ever likely to be able to observe in real-time. We might call the 'self-organizing' principles of evolution a sort of evolutionary 'invisible hand' which provides the direction towards synergy, sophistication, and complexity within and between existing organisms.

The levels of composition that the brain has had to deal with have been very limited. In fact it is the evolution of the human species into one that uses technology to aid its construction and exploitation of patterns that only now makes it possible to transcend the human time scale. It is the capacity for abstract reasoning, making connections between things, constructing models of patterned relationships between things, even things that don't exist physically but merely as concepts, that allows us to transcend our human levels of composition.

Conceptual thinking bequeaths the human this gift by allowing it to construct meanings out of meanings, to make deductions. Of course imagination is also beneficial, as it allows the construction of things that don't actually exist anywhere, but which could exist, in theory, based on the observed patterns of things that can or have been observed.

We become selectively and more or less exclusively aware of 'symbiotic' relationships as we desire a world defined by symbiosis and synergy. We interpret synergy as 'proof' of our special place in the universe as the 'creation' of a 'god' who will care for us. This gives us a sense of comfort, security, and 'meaning'. We define ecosystems and social systems as 'harmonious', when the only parts of these systems that can experience anything, individual organisms, live in competition, and therefore chronic conflict with each other. It is human nature to deny those parts of reality that do not supply us with pleasurable feelings.

Humans observe some level of 'symbiosis' in their lives which they can't explain. It is as if they were welcome in the universe, almost as if it had been made for their benefit. They have sunshine and beautiful children, and ice-cream and cars and houses and rule the animal kingdom. They also have disease and pestilence and droughts, and disasters, and malformed children and untold suffering, unrealized desire, and unrequited love.

You might think that this would lead the human to recognize that the universe is indifferent to its existence. However, ironically, the existence of all this bad stuff, rather than driving humans to a recognition of reality, merely feeds their fundamental insecurity, and drives them to construct comforting myths that put them back in control, back in the center of things, and safe and welcome once more.

We cannot directly observe the processes of evolution. They can only be comprehended indirectly via abstract reasoning, imagination, and deduction. Evolution provides little by way of comforts for the insecure human seeking validation and reassurance of their special place at the center of the universe. This is why some people still cling to 'revealed' or 'biblical' 'truth' and seek to deny or discredit evolution. Evolution is pretty discouraging on an emotional level. It rules out any need of recourse to anything mystical. It mocks our anthropocentrism.

It is only fitting that we consider 'awareness' once more. Awareness is the most 'mystical' and 'inexplicable' of things that we could consider. It is the fundamental unit of existence, without which all the rest of reality would be irrelevant, as nothing would be aware of it. Roger Penrose, in 'Shadows of the mind', considers how, at its most fundamental level, the mind exhibits the features of quantum mechanics, at the level of the cyto-skeleton. Penrose suggests that descriptions at the neuron level may be mere 'shadows' of the deeper cyto-skeletal actions. According to Penrose, paramecium, single celled organisms, have a 'cyto-skeleton' that acts as their nervous system.

They use fine hair-like cilia to move around. They exhibit signs consistent with awareness-consciousness. Their behavior suggests they sense, predict, anticipate, seek out food, withdraw from threats, and therefore imagine and even possibly 'learn'. Given that each neuron in the brain has its own cyto-skeleton, Penrose considers it reasonable to suggest the possibility that each neuron in the brain may have its own awareness-consciousness.

Thoughts, feelings, emotions and desires are correlated with the production and flux of neuro-peptides in the brain. There are receptors to neuro-peptides in brain cells and in cells of the immune system. As immune cells make the same peptides that are correlated with thought, some neurologists claim that an immune cell is a circulating nervous system, and may be a conscious, thinking entity.

Binge and Purge as the principle of evolution

Evolution can be seen as a brainstorming algorithm which poses the open question; 'What could the meaning of life be, and what forms could life take?' This brainstorming algorithm operates on the principle of binge and purge. This principle could also be expressed via the biblical passage; 'Many are called, but few are chosen.' Random mutation produces a binge of life-forms. The interactive environment provides (negative) selection pressures from which to purge the brainstormed supply of possible life-forms and interactive environments of less adaptive life-forms. The process produces contemporaneous synergies of mutually interactive adaptation.

The direction towards increasing sophistication and complexity emerges as a result of competition between life-forms. Where complexity and sophistication provide a comparative advantage, then more complex and sophisticated life-forms will beat the competition. The landscape will come to be defined by more and more complex and sophisticated life-forms over billions of years.

However we still cannot define the nature of awareness within this process. Is awareness a contemporaneous product of the interactions that produce it? An epiphenomena? Or is awareness a universal entity that merely inhabits experience engines and then, once the particular experience engine it is inhabiting dies, goes on to inhabit further experience engines?

Without competition, no negative selection, just increasing populations of brainstormed outcomes

If there was no competition for traits, then mutations would not be negatively selected. There would be no selection pressures. More sophisticated and complex mutated offspring would emerge, and co-exist with their non-mutated parents, cousins, and so on. It would be like keeping all the ideas that emerged from a brainstorming session. As long as they could survive and reproduce, they would continue to. Complexity and sophistication would constitute no competitive advantage, in the absence of competition. This would assume that no behavioral mutation emerged which produced a tendency in the carrier to exterminate other species. This would assume a non Pareto-efficient world in which no creature needed to, or had the behavioral tendency, the instinct, to kill any other creature.

Evolution is passive and without imagination. It is the ultimate form of brainstorming. However we, the results of this brainstorming, do have imaginations. We can project possible outcomes into the future based on our experience. We can imagine what the consequences of actions will be. We can actively engineer our future. We can engage in 'positive' selection, what is known as eugenics. We have engaged in positive selection in conventional engineering for a few thousand years, and have reaped the benefits in terms of technologies that make our lives more comfortable, rewarding and satisfying.

Benefiting from 4 Billion years of experimentation

The evolution of the universe, the organisms that populate it, and our cultural forms, represent the accumulated 'hits' of 4 Billion years of 'brainstorming'. Evolution produced flight, and sonar, digital data storage (genes) and quantum computers (brains). This planet has been like a huge laboratory for extremely long term experimentation. Through billions of years of hit and miss, hits have accumulated in the form of adaptive functionality. By studying the forms and functions that have been produced by nature, we can benefit from almost 4 billion years of evolution. The results are documented in the forms of living organisms. We can employ 'reverse engineering' to learn the secrets they hold. We face challenges concerning how to adapt to particular environments. We can observe and emulate the adaptive functionality of nature. Some animals are adapted to living in extreme conditions.

Some animals produce, internally, vitamins and proteins that we humans cannot. Many of the compounds in plants have properties that we stand to benefit from. When we destroy an ecosystem and the organisms dependent upon that whole, we destroy an untold wealth of potential benefits. It is in our self-interest to ensure that we do not destroy the treasure chest of nature we have inherited, merely to gain some relatively insignificant and superficial immediate and short term benefits.

The process of evolution has been vaguely documented in the form of fossils. The process had to be deduced by exceptionally intuitive and rigorous intellects. The processes of evolution can now, at an elementary level, be modeled by computer programs such as TIERRA. What surprised many scientists and lay people alike was the way in which complex 'behaviors' naturally emerge from interactions governed by simple rules.

Such programs model the complex adaptive behavior of complex systems. The emergence of complexity from simplicity surprised the programmers, and are still surprising people. These results support my own contention that apparent complexity can emerge from the interaction of simple 'primerties' acting according to simple algorithms or 'rules, of interaction.

Gene manipulation of plants and animals

Of course every industry claims that whatever it does is safe and poses no threat to anyone. Of course they want to regulate themselves. Gene manipulated plants were being field tested under 'controlled' conditions, which were meant to ensure that none of the gene manipulated plants or seeds escaped the control area and 'infected' or 'contaminated' surrounding areas. Once out in the environment, plants could be spread in bird droppings, by the wind, by water, or as seeds stuck to animal fur. There would be no way of preventing them from traveling vast distances and 'contaminating' the ecosystem, reproducing and perhaps competing with, even replacing, current plant species, and doing unknowable damage to the delicately balanced ecosystem that we depend upon for our survival. This is the big point: the dangers are unknowable. However the supposed control area became notorious for its 'escapees'. The crops on huge areas of land surrounding the control areas were quietly bought up by the company and secretly burnt off.

Contrary to popular belief, genetic engineering (GE) of plants leads to an *increase* in the use of chemicals

Lots of GE modifications aim to allow increased use of pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals. Many plants are genetically engineered to have increased tolerance to chemicals that weeds and insects are vulnerable to. This allows an increase in the use of chemicals. GE produces an overall increase in use of chemicals, rather than the decrease that many people assume.

Live fast and die young Vs stay hungry

Pesticides are often fertilizers that speed up the life-cycle of plants so that they die sooner. The opposite, 'calorie restriction', is known to extend the lives of animals. Starvation diets prolong the lives of fish by up to 60%, and flies on such diets live up to 40% longer. 'Starved' cells are stimulated to produce the molecules that repair DNA and protect cells. Bio-technologists have synthesized these molecules. Their synthetic versions produce the equivalent effect of calorie restriction. Hence the consumers stand to benefit without the costs.

The known costs, that is. They have already doubled the lifespans of mice using this technology. Other scientists have already managed to 'silence', to turn off the NfkB chromosomes which normally produce aging in cells and organisms. They have regenerated areas of cells in the skin of mice, returning these areas to their original 'young' state, even as the rest of the mouse ages. Remember that our DNA ultimately kills us. We are programmed to die. What would this say about the 'meaning' of life?

The precautionary tales of the Cane Toad and Killer snail

The cane toad was introduced to Australia, to far North Queensland, to control a particular pest to cane farmer, the cane beetle. The cane toad itself is now an even greater pest to agriculture than the beetle it had been brought in to 'control'. A particular species of snail had been introduced to Hawaii for human consumption. This imported snail went on to compete with the local snails, threatening them with extinction. So a 'killer' snail, one that ate other snails, was introduced to control it. The killer snail did kill, but the wrong snails. It killed the local snails that it had been brought in to protect. Pretty horrific too, basically creeping up on its victim and sucking it out of its shell! Real Stephen King stuff.

Modern agricultural practices threaten diversity

One of the strengths of 'binge and purge' evolution is diversity. Diversity means that there are a large range of organisms. This means that life 'per se' is less vulnerable to any particular pathogens or environmental changes. However modern agricultural practices focus on profitability, rather than diversity. The resulting homogeneity means that we are vulnerable to any pathogen or environmental change that threatens the few species of plants and animals that are still farmed.

Further, we do not understand how ecosystems function. We are not in a position to predict the longer-term consequences of many agricultural practices. We have over-farmed much of our soils. The rest we have lost to erosion due to over-farming and droughts. We have left such a bleak legacy to future generations that in future we may resort to aqua-culture, and even 'aero-culture', growing plants without soil. We have bled many rivers dry by diverting their water into irrigation schemes.

We have been extremely wasteful with the natural capital we inherited. 75% all plants that had been farmed in the past are today extinct. Most agriculture today takes the form of mono-culture farms. These lead to a growth in the number of parasites which in turn leads to an increased use of petro-chemical pesticides and fertilizers, which ultimately produce resistant weeds and parasites, and soil and plant toxicity.

Motivating binge and purge, hit and miss creativity

We ourselves employ the process of evolution when we engage in creative brainstorming. Technological innovation is the result of a process of hit and miss. The hits accumulate in our products and processes. We deliberately seek innovations during deliberate research and development, however many innovations were not anticipated or predicted by anyone. They emerged from random observations and 'accidents'. It is human nature to seek patterns in our environment.

We seek to identify relationships between things, to make sense of them, and construct 'meanings'. We experiment with ideas, with social systems, with chords and notes. We are rewarded by our hits, and this motivates us to continue with a process that is itself frustrating, as it produces many more misses than hits. In fact many people never experience any hits at all. Thus we reward these few hits massively, to motivate others to take the great risk of investing effort and sacrificing all the alternative opportunities, on the rare chance that they will be successful.

Most innovators and investors in innovations are equally extrinsically motivated by the chance at success, wealth, and fame, and intrinsically motivated by their passion for innovation. They are dreamers and visionaries. They will endure all manner of hardships for the chance to discover something, to invent something, to write something new.

Unfortunately extrinsic selection pressures often work against true rigor, innovation, and creativity. People are often rewarded by the status quo for maintaining the status quo, rather than truly innovating. Scientists are rewarded for finding more efficient and terrible ways of killing and destroying.

Artists are usually ignored in their lifetimes. True innovation is hard for the average person to appreciate. Innovators are by their very nature well ahead of the pack, so it is no surprise that the pack fail to recognize the value of their innovations and contributions.

People are usually rewarded for pandering to the lowest tastes and intelligences, for reinforcing, validating, and reassuring current attitudes, beliefs, definitions, and their reflexive systems of relations of opportunistic exploitation of inherited inequality. Those people who produced actual innovations and made the greatest contributions to our social world, usually did so at a great personal sacrifice, with no recognition or reward. They were and are more likely to be victimized for their efforts than applauded and rewarded.

For example whistle-blowers who follow their ethical instincts are severely punished for doing so. It is only rarely, as in the case of whistle-blowers in the United States health care system, that whistle-blowers are compensated in any way for the great contributions and sacrifices that they make. Some people actually seek employment in those industries simply to seek out forms of corruption, waste, and incompetent management and administration. They are more or less professional whistle-blowers motivated by multimillion dollar rewards. Those whistle-blowers save the hospital system and pharmaceutical schemes billions of dollars.

In South Korea private individuals can set up cameras to document traffic violations, and are paid by the government for each violation they document. This is a brilliant idea. It would cost the police force nothing, and produce a real disincentive for drivers to violate traffic regulations. Anyone could be documenting your behavior. This means you have a real incentive to drive safely and appropriately. If we were really genuine about reducing the trauma and costs associated with speeding and other traffic violations, we would introduce such a system. I was interested to learn about this practice while I was teaching English in South Korea, as I had advocated a similar idea myself years ago, and was happy to be validated for once. When you are a 'social' innovator, validation is a rare experience.

Convergence and synergy as intuitive and passive products of evolutionary processes

Diversity of beliefs provides a pool upon which selection pressures can operate. They can select for convergence with reality, or in other words, their adaptive functionalism. Convergence is random. This convergence is what we refer to as truth or knowledge. The most basic selection pressure relates to survival and reproduction. Any behavioral tendency that leads to the organism failing to reproduce, will mean the elimination of that behavioral tendency from the gene pool.

Far less-than-optimal behavioral tendencies will still be reproduced as long as they don't produce a net, holistic anti-survival-reproduction effect. In this way many sub-optimal tendencies are transmitted from generation to generation, as the generations manage to survive and reproduce in spite of them.

Tendencies to physical violence, opportunism, superstition and meat eating shouldn't be glorified simply because we have managed to survive in spite of them. Remember that not all transmitted phenotypes and tendencies are automatically positive just because they are present in otherwise successful organisms. It is the net effect of the whole, of all the transmitted tendencies combined, that determines whether an organism will persist or not.

One tendency amongst some living things, and an especial characteristic of some humans, is to seek to identify patterns in the environment and to exploit them. This tendency has proven functionally adaptive. We can observe the world around us with our senses. Our brains can store these observations as memories.

Intelligence allows us to compare current observations with previously ones. Thus we can construct patterns. We can construct relations between things. Thus we construct 'meaning'. The meaning of something is its relationship to everything else. The emergence of verbal and later written languages facilitated the wider distribution and accumulation of the 'knowledge' that we accumulated over thousands of years of 'hit and miss' speculation, observation, and deduction.

Language was functionally adapted. Language provided advantages. Those groups of the species with greater language skills had a competitive advantage over their predators (they could warn each other, and leave warnings for each other about potential hazards), over their prey (they could train each other to identify signs of prey, and communicate while hunting), and their competition (they could organize better and outwit the other tribes). They could also produce more harmonious and productive working and living arrangements within their own tribes, and hence increase their tribe's potential to withstand internal and external threats. These communication skills accumulated in the particular tribes, and in the species as a whole, over vast time spans.

Remember that this whole development probably began with the ability of some creature to produce some sort of noise, together with the tendency to respond to situations by making this noise. The creature may have tended to respond to the presence of prey or predators with that noise. This noise may have alarmed peers to the presence of the prey or predator. The noise may have frightened off predators, or informed other members of hunting parties of the presence, location, number, and direction of prey.

The point is that the ability to make the noise, and the behavioral tendency to make the noise, both of which were the result of previous random mutations, provided advantages to the creature. The advantages would have facilitated its survival and reproduction. It would experience an advantage over its competitors. It would be more likely to survive and reproduce than those organisms without the advantage. The utterance, like birdsong, may have attracted mates as well, and encouraged the organisms, and the utterances, reproduction and accumulation. Read more about language and semiotics in 'Convergences'.

Advantages will generally be reproduced. Random mutation would occur every now and then as the creatures reproduce. Any of these random mutations could confer benefits or disadvantages on that generation of the creature. Those that conferred net disadvantages would lead the creature to extinction. Those that provided net advantages would facilitate survival and reproduction. The new mutations would be reproduced along with the

already present ones, ones that had accumulated in the organisms evolutionary past. Random mutations, through this process, gradually, over millions and millions of generations, accumulate.

Remember that we are referring to both behavioral tendencies, the product of the interaction between phenotypes and the external environment, and what we more intuitively refer to as physical characteristics. They are both equally physical, even though we tend to refer to behaviors as 'psychological'. This is a result of the hegemony of Cartesian and religious-dogma based dualistic -hierarchical ways of defining and reason(s)ing.

Convergences between an organism and its environment are to be intuitively anticipated. The complexity of the environment determines whether complex, sophisticated organisms, or more simple ones, will be adapted to it. A simple environment favors simpler organisms. A complex one favors more complex and sophisticated ones. Thus simple organisms thrive in their niches, while more sophisticated organisms find their trades in niches that favor complexity and sophistication.

As the environment we exist in is complex, it favors complexity and sophistication. Thus the degree of complexity and sophistication in the organisms present today is convergent with this environment. They display high levels of complexity and sophistication. Increases in complexity and sophistication will tend to accumulate over billions of years, as long as this represents a convergence with the environment.

What convergence refers to is the compatibility between how the organism tends to behave in any particular environment, and the behaviors that are beneficial to survival and reproduction in that particular environment. Some level of symbiosis, synergy, harmony, or 'perfect match' is requisite to any organism or eco-system existing at all. The existence of some level of Symbiosis or synergy is therefore intuitive. We require no recourse to 'creators' or 'divine plans' to explain it. In any case symbiosis is not the perfect harmony you would expect of a omnipotent and loving god or creator. It is merely the minimum requisite level of mutual compatibility necessary for the contemporaneous co-existence of organisms.

Of course all we can only observe is the end product, and not the process. We can therefore be forgiven for being baffled by the existence of symbiosis, complexity, and sophistication, without any obvious explanation. Our natural tendencies lead us to postulate that something must have created this complexity and sophistication. We couldn't imagine how it could have arisen out of any natural processes. Hopefully, however, you can now imagine how it can and did emerge, without a 'plan', intention, or guiding purpose. Now you have no need of recourse to any superstitious or mystical 'explanations'. They are completely redundant, unnecessary, and contribute nothing to our capacity to understand anything other than human nature itself.

Even 'one step' evolution would be a superior explanation than that of 'creationism' and 'gods'. As Hume stated, if we are going to assume 'one step creationism' and a god that wasn't itself 'created', then we might just as well assume 'one step evolution' from some other source that always existed and didn't itself need to be produced. We could simply just accept it as a natural phenomenon, as the nature of reality.

Adding another level of assumption adds nothing to our understanding. It simply adds more assumptions to the mix. The simpler and more elegant explanation is simply that our existence and world as it is implicitly demonstrates the reality of some form of evolution. If you like it can be a 'one-step', spontaneous, instantaneous phenomena.

So even if you can't or won't accept a billions-of-years long incremental process of reproduction and accumulation of random mutations filtered for functional adaption by the environment, 'one-step' evolution is still a superior 'theory' to religious dogma requiring the eternal existence of some god with the power and motivation to 'create' us and our world as it is.

Murray Gell-Mann, in 'The Quark and the Jaguar', writes about the convergence between schemata and the reality they refer to, in an active way, implicitly, and probably unwittingly, implying that organisms deliberately move towards greater convergence with reality. This would be the equivalent to the Lamarckian theory that giraffes evolved long necks as they thought this would be a good idea, that it might be useful to reach the taller branches of trees and so on. Gell-Mann's 'schemata' are the equivalent of my 'noetic structures'. They are the compression of

experience into stored, patterned information and algorithms. So I wish to make it clear that this process is passive. It emerges intuitively and naturally as part of the process of evolution.

While the more scientific among us do consciously seek greater convergence between our beliefs and reality, most people merely seek reassurance. They seek to prove what they want to be true. They seek to validate beliefs that provide them with pleasurable feelings of comfort, security, and significance. Most humans do not actively seek out convergence any more than evolution does. However those beliefs that are convergent with reality provide real benefits. People find the news of science that humans are not at the center of the universe, and that our wills are not free, quite distressing. However they welcome the comforts, conveniences, and satisfactions that other 'innovations' of science bring. Given the chance they would selectively dismiss the unwelcome scientific 'truths' while affirming the convenient and satisfying ones. In their daily lives, most people, including Scientists themselves, do. However over time the truth will out.

The only way to get access to the benefits of science is to accept the affective (emotional) costs. Individuals that embrace compelling arguments and thus 'converge' with reality, enjoy a competitive advantage over those who do not. They enjoy benefits the less convergent individuals aspire to. Ultimately these benefits will motivate others to converge with reality themselves. Any time competition for resources and mates reaches a critical point only the most adapted and convergent survive and reproduce. So even though few people actively seek convergence, they tend to move in this direction, 'motivated' by selection pressures.

The same occurs with organisms and 'species'. Convergence is a natural product of the process. Once we understand the process we will anticipate it emerging at some point in the evolution of any biological system. And as the components of all systems must necessarily be reflexively convergent with their collective wholes, convergence can be expected to define any and all systems, biological or otherwise. The process is hit and miss, and hence destructive, even painful, however it will tend towards a degree of synergy.

Convergence is a process. Being convergent is the state convergence produces. So what do I mean by being convergent? I have chosen this term to maintain precise and passive language usage. To be convergent means that there is a purely coincidental, though intuitively anticipatory, correspondence between what you think and what is true, between your behavioral tendencies and the sort of behaviors that facilitate survival and reproduction in the particular environment you find yourself in at any particular time.

The co-incidence of mutation and advantage is random. The process of transmitting and accumulating mutations is random. The selection pressures that operate upon them, while also being merely reflexive, and thus passive, do however produce a non-random direction for the process of evolution. The selection pressures are the invisible hand that produce the unplanned, unintended, yet intuitively inexorable direction towards greater convergence, towards greater correspondence between what the inherited qualities of an organism allow and motivate an organism to do, and abilities and behaviors that are ideal to surviving and reproducing in a particular environment or situation.

If a situation or environment is stable in ways that impact on potential convergence / correspondence, then given enough time, any DNA line prone to mutation facing selection pressures such as a limit on potential trades, territories, niches and therefore competition, will end up mutating to the limits of its potential, in the direction of convergence with the environment.

In the absence of competition, and a 'simple' and stable environment, the organisms we will be able to observe in them will also tend to be simple. When I drove around Australia I came across a coastal area in Western Australia where the one celled organisms from which we are believed to have ultimately evolved still live. They are as adapted to their environment today as they had been billions of years ago. They are still convergent with their environment.

Remember that other DNA lines, other species, and other carriers of the same DNA line, members of the same species, make up elements of the environment in which any DNA line exists. The mutation of competing DNA carriers represents a change in the environment. All participating DNA lines in an environment exist

interdependently. For any particular DNA line to exist in the presence of other DNA lines, it must exhibit qualities that are compatible with this co-existence. If it didn't, it would perish. This means that at any particular moment we will only be able to observe DNA lines that are compatible with each other as a whole. It will appear as if we are observing some well-designed, well-orchestrated sets of more or less symbiotic properties and relationships.

Without a comprehension of the process of evolution we would tend to suspect some guiding hand must have designed and orchestrated the whole situation. Without an understanding of the invisible hand of convergence, of evolution, our observations would tend to, under the dominant hegemonic systems of definitions, reinforce our acceptance or belief in the existence of a god which at some point created all that we can observe. Freed of these hegemonic definitions, of this 'dogma', we would simply accept reality as it was, as a natural phenomenon, as 'one-step' evolution.

Really simply put, we wouldn't exist to marvel at our existence if we did not by pure chance exhibit a correspondence or convergence with our environments. Everything else in our environment must also be compatible with everything else, on a holistic level, or it wouldn't work. We wouldn't be here to be impressed or puzzled.

There is a warning implicit in this awareness. If we change our environment too much we may produce a new whole, perhaps one in which we are no longer adapted.

All correspondences are dynamic. Our environment may change, and we would lose our current correspondence with it, our symbiotic relationship with it. We would perish. Any sentient being that emerged to observe the new reality would not be aware that we were once the 'beneficiaries' of previously contemporaneous correspondences. They would merely see an apparently harmonious whole set of interactions and conditions. They could be forgiven for marveling at the apparent order and harmony of the universe, at how well everything was adapted to its environments, at how symbiotic the whole was. They could be forgiven for postulating that the universe must have been created for them.

The level of convergence and correspondence would appear too great to conceivably have come about randomly. We would forgive them for concluding that they were the reason for all of the universe existing, and that they would always exist, that their god must have made the universe for them.

The tendency of the process of evolution is to produce, at least temporarily, relationships of convergence and correspondence. The current one could easily be a 'Humean uniformity', a temporary set of synergistic relationships. They may at any moment be replaced by new sets of relationships in which the synergies our existence is dependent on simply disappear. This is the nature of our interest in the status quo. Constant meteor strikes on the moon or Mars may have destroyed the fragile synergistic balances upon which complex and sophisticated forms of life are dependent, or life per se. The same could occur here. Or we might simply change this planet so much that we were no longer adapted to it. Our current way of life does appear to be becoming less and less convergent with the reality we are ourselves contributing to producing.

Those actors who believe sacrificing virgins will improve agriculture and defense, will be less successful than those who believe in fertilizer, irrigation, and good relations with their neighbors. Given the competition for limited resources, the actors with the effective foreign relations and good agricultural practices will be better adapted and therefore out-survive-reproduce their superstitious, militaristic competition. The phenotype and tendencies to believe in irrigation and peace-keeping, will be passed onto future generations, while the genes of the phenotypes tending towards superstitious behaviors and militarism will not be passed on.

We survive because we are adapted to our habitat, at this particular constellation of space-time-geography. Should that habitat change, say the temperature rise by 20 degrees, then we would no longer be adapted, and would not survive. We are not 'adapted' per se to the earth, merely to the earth pretty much exactly as it is right now, and has been for the last few hundred thousand years.

The evolution of ideas: the tendency for social reality to converge with reality

There will tend to be an automatic very long term tendency towards more scientific tendencies and behaviors. There will tend to be a very long term gradual accumulating tendency towards correspondence between

our subjective and social realities, and the objective or primary reality. Genes producing phenotypes with a tendency to jump from cliffs, in the belief that the gods will rescue them, will not survive long. Genes producing phenotypes with a tendency to believe that they should engage in an Armageddon so that god's heaven on earth can emerge, will not survive forever.

The aim of philosophy is to reach for the greatest convergence and correspondence between the primary reality, and all the other secondary and social realities. The philosophical drive is part of a particular phenotype, derived from a more commonly shared genotype. The greater the influence of the philosophical phenotype upon the species, the greater will be the convergence and correspondence between the dominant hegemonic definitions and the primary reality. This greater convergence and correspondence will equate to more optimal definitions and systems of relations in terms of survival and reproduction. The closer you come to fully comprehending the full and true nature of reality, and the realities of our natures, the closer your subjective reality will converge with the external objective reality.

Greater convergence equates to a greater functional adaptation. Perhaps I can afford to be optimistic on an evolutionary scale, while maintaining realistic, that is, abjectly pessimistic, about improvements in my own lifetime. Like all philosophers, I write with an eye on eternity. I have to focus on the seeds I am sowing, rather than on any harvest I am likely to reap any time soon.

DNA's potential for brainstorming

The full genome of an organism is actually present in every cell. Different bits of it are expressed or activated in each particular cell. In most mammals each differentiated bit of DNA is specialized once it has been expressed, once it has been 'switched on' to become a limb or an organ. The rest of the DNA is then 'turned off' permanently. We cannot regrow a lost limb or organ.

However some animals, and many plants, can regenerate all their cells from any one cell. Which genes will be 'expressed' is dependent on the environment. A cutting can be taken from a plant, and a clone can be made from it. Totipotency means that any part of the cutting that you place in the ground can sprout roots, and any part that is in the sunlight can sprout leaves.

You can cut some animals up, and the pieces will grow into new animals. This is referred to as protopotency. Many of us are familiar with lizards that regrow lost tails.

It is a fact that 97% of our DNA is passive. This raises the question of what sort of superpowers might be latent within our genome. The genome may have hugely, as yet expressed, realized, or tapped, potential for brainstorming. What might emerge when this DNA is activated? It may merely represent built in redundancy. It may be the scaffolding that made the building of the 'arch' from the remaining 3% possible. Our genome may have tried lots of other combinations already, and found they lacked functional adaptation. Thus this 97% may just be 'junk'. We might also consider what recessive gene 'time-bombs' may lurk among that 97%.

The most fundamental mutation is the switching on and off of some combinations of the CTAG gene code. Other forms of mutation occur due to sub-atomic particles colliding with the molecules that make up these gene sequences, thus damaging our D.N.A.

The genetic plans of mice and men are 99.9% identical. We share 99.9% of our genome with mice. This is terribly unfortunate for mice. We use them as test animals because of their similarities with humans, and because we can. They have no armies to defend their rights.

In 'The Blind Watchmaker' Richard Dawkins notes that the rate of D.N.A mutation only 1% in 5 Million replications. Current species exist not just because they are good at surviving, but as they are good at evolving. The symmetry and segmentation of vertebrates and insects facilitates evolution. The giraffe's neck required merely the repetition of one step of its 'embryology'. Segmented insects need only repeat one step and they have a new, easily incorporated, usable, body part. The insect world therefore demonstrates a high degree of evolve-ability.

Sex

As evolution is dependent on mutation, and all organisms die, reproduction is actually more important to evolution than survival. Survival ensures the survival of individual organisms. Reproduction ensures the survival of life per se, and of evolution as a process. Hence instincts, desires, faculties, and organs that promote reproduction can intuitively be expected to demonstrate the greatest level of convergence. The forms which facilitate and motivate reproduction are predominant in nature.

Sex is not pleasurable to encourage reproduction. Rather, it became the dominant as pleasure 'motivates' reproduction, and facilitates greater mutation, which facilitates the evolution of increasing functional adaptation. Pleasure motivates. The earth wasn't made hospitable for us to survive in. Rather, we manage survive in it because it is more or less hospitable. Our organs don't exist to serve functions. We exist because they do function. The conventional 'wisdom' would lead us to argue that strawberries taste good so that we will eat them, and animals are dumber than us so we can exploit them. Rather convenient. Women should not forget that god made them weaker so that men could dominate them. Oh, and god made privileges, so that we could pass them onto the priests.

Sexual reproduction is the dominant form of reproduction. Sexual reproduction provides greater scope for mutation and variation than asexual reproduction. Many plants reproduce sexually. Flowers look like aroused vaginas because they are. In the middle of this aroused vagina is an erect penis. Such hermaphroditism, the presence of organs producing sperm and ovum in the same individual, occurs in the great majority of flowering plants. Most

hermaphroditic plants produce male and female elements at different times to ensure cross-pollination, but a few, such as the violet and the evening primrose, are self-pollinated.

Plants are fertilized or pollinated when the wind or insects carry their pollen, their semen, to other plants. Sexual reproduction allows genes to be shared. Hermaphroditism also commonly occurs in many invertebrate animals, in the hagfish and tunicate, and a genus of sea bass, sponges, coelenterates, some mollusks, and earthworms. It occurs occasionally in other fishes, and in frogs, toads, and some newts. Flatworms have a complete set of male and female gonads in each segment and regularly fertilize themselves.

However Hermaphrodite animals are rarely self-fertilizing; in most cases the spermatozoa and ova mature at different times, or the male and female external organs are located so that self-fertilization is impossible.

Sexual reproduction improves the chances of offspring being spared dangerous mutations. Both parents must possess the potentially dangerous genes for them to be expressed in their children. But this also means that recessive genes are passed on to future generations, like a genetic 'time bomb'. If the dangerous gene was always expressed, then eventually it would die out with its host organism, representing as it does a disadvantage to survival and reproduction. Recessive genes 'survive' to do their damage in future generations. They are the 'sleepers' of 'genetic terror'.

Only genetic defects that emerge later in life, after an organism has reproduced and passed on inferior genes, will be common. The carrier must have time and relative health to reproduce and pass the defective genes onto the next generation. If the defect destroys the host organism before it has reproduced, the defect will not be reproduced. It is for this reason that viruses that kill their host organism are not common. Where they do occur they are self-limiting. Plagues ultimately wipe out both the hosts and the carriers. Humanity may be such a plague virus. We appear to be destroying our hosts, the ecosystems upon which we are dependent.

Charles Darwin wrote that some remote progenitor of the whole vertebrate kingdom appears to have been hermaphrodite or androgynous. Modern scientists believe that during the early stages of evolution every animal was probably hermaphroditic. Freud was certain that all humans are by nature bi-sexual.

A-sexual reproduction produces mostly clones of the original. The only form of variation in a-sexual reproduction is random mutation.

We are mutants

The popular language culture tends to define a 'mutant' as 'defective', a 'mistake'. However there can be no mistakes unless there is some intention. Evolution is a process that is indifferent to its outcomes. In fact we are in fact mutants. We have mutated from single cell creatures, into fish, into lizards, into mammals, into apes, into Neanderthal man, into us. We will continue to mutate, if we don't annihilate ourselves first.

Talented, gorgeous geniuses are equally 'mutations' as are Down Syndrome children, and children with two heads, tails, or no feet. We are all mutations. The only difference is that some mutations confer competitive advantages on their organism. Down syndrome and other mutations belong as much to the story of evolution as occasional genius and beauty do. All the diverse species emerged as a result of mutation. When a sub-set of a new generation of organisms has mutated so far that it can no longer reproduce with the majority of its peers, or the previous generation, it has become a new species. A species is made up of organisms that can sexually reproduce only among themselves.

We are attracted to potential mates due to their beauty, talents, personality, or the material benefits they can offer us and our offspring. We reject many potential mates, who experience this as 'negative' selection. The lucky who are free to choose their mates at will, will experience this as positive selection.

Most people who oppose eugenics fear they would be excluded from reproduction due to their own poor genetic inheritance. They will misrepresent eugenicists' aims by employing the 'straw man' of racist Nazi notions of producing some 'master race' with narrowly defined 'ideal' features. Eugenics is, in fact, about producing genetic 'justice' and equality of power. It is about providing each child with the best genetic inheritance we can.

There is no lack of diversity in the gene pool in terms of beauty from which to select. There are many forms of beauty. Beauty is not defined by eye color, skin color, or hair color. There is a diverse palate of beauty from which to paint the future aesthetic picture of humanity. There are many forms of beauty completely compatible with all other eugenic considerations, such as health and intelligence.

Many people have genes which are not expressed in their own phenotype. These genes are 'recessive'. The quality they have the potential to produce is not observable in them. When they mate, such recessive genes will only be expressed if their mate also has the same gene, either expressed, or recessive. Thus a brown-eyed couple can have blue-eyed children, if they both have a recessive gene for blue-eyes. If one of the parents have blue eyes (an expressed gene for blue-eyes) and the other has a recessive gene for blue eyes, then they too will have blue-eyed children. The 'expression' of the genes that produce genius, beauty, health, and talent is dependent on both parents having that rare combination of genes that produces these qualities.

Thus geneticists say that 'genius' does not breed true. It is in fact not possible at present to determine the specific traits that will be expressed in the not-yet-conceived. It is more about general features and probabilities. Two attractive, healthy, intelligent, well-balanced people are more likely to produce children with similar holistic inheritances. Ugly, obese, unhealthy, morons are unlikely to produce beautiful, intelligent, healthy children. Who would you chose as your next-life parents, if you had the choice? This is the only information I need from you to reveal your position on eugenics.

Conspicuous consumption and status goods

Female birds of a particular species are particularly attracted to males with extremely long, colorful tails. The Males' ability to survive despite such a 'handicap', its ability to afford such a conspicuous consumption of energy, indicates its 'status' as particularly strong and vital. Thus the tail is a status good. It is an indicator of the owner's status.

Humans similarly invest in 'conspicuous' consumption on 'status' goods to demonstrate, or deceive others into thinking, that we are so successful that we can afford it. Any extreme form of ostentation could do the trick, from hugely overpowered luxury cars and diamond rings, to Michelin dining and hours spent in the gym and solarium. These can all be employed to imply wealth and success.

Business suits were once an indicator of wealth and status, but now casual dress is superseding it as a show of power and status. Only the rich and creatively talented can 'get away' with taking little care with their grooming. Security guards have to wear suits, so it is an indicator of their powerlessness and low status. Computer programmers, on the other hand, have market power, and maybe even their own businesses, so they can wear whatever they like.

As most people apparently don't like wearing business suits or even ties, those that can afford to dress as they please must be wealthy and successful. People with real power don't have to worry about impressing anyone with their appearance. They have 'real' power. They don't need to fake it with impression management. They project their confidence by wearing whatever they are most comfortable in, making no concessions for other people's opinions. They are independent. They can ride their bicycle to work if they want to. They don't need any status symbols to impress people. If they do own a nice car it's because they like the car, and not because they want to impress anyone.

We have binged on religion, now it is time for a purge

There is so much to be learned from all the religions and belief systems of the world. We should think of our religious legacy as 'evolutionary brainstorming'. We should 'pick them over' and take the best bits, leaving the rest to return to dust.

The problems begin when we treat religion as revealed truth, as dogma. More than 50% of Americans still accept the biblical dogma of creationism, and reject evolution. The authors of the world religions and secular religions, including voodoo economics, Nazism, and communism, believed that it was necessary to define their wisdom as a whole and sacred and infallible, as the 'end of history' (Marx), the 'final revelations' (Mohamed).

They believed they themselves were wise enough to make any revisions or improvements to their philosophies redundant. In order to encourage people to comply with their own beliefs, they had to claim that the beliefs were the infallible word of god, of god's angel, of god's prophet, or of historical determinism. The beliefs were to be cut in stone, never to be changed. The scriptures would be defined as sacred, and no-one was to challenge them. This was the death of them as wise philosophies.

They became dogma. They became assertions that no-one was to challenge or interrogate. No further development was seen as necessary or possible. Sheer arrogance or short-sightedness? Good intentions perhaps, but the result has been conflicts over fatuous dogma. The baby was not thrown out with the bathwater, it was drowned in the bath water, and left there. Read 'Religion' to see what I mean.

Perhaps George Bernard Shaw has made the most revealing comment when he writes 'No man ever believes that the Bible means what it says: He is always convinced that it says what he means'. History and the present are full of people who use the biblical scriptures to justify their actions, whether it be slavery, rape, murder, theft, genocide, vivisection, the exploitation of the less powerful, the industrial scale, systematic cruelty to animals implicit in modern 'industrial-farming' practices, war, male and female genital mutilation, 'noble' lies, or prescriptions against same-sex marriage, homosexuality, anal sex, oral sex, masturbation, and euthanasia.

Everyone and anyone has and continues to seek to justify any manner of behaviors with reference to some 'holy' scripture, secular or otherwise. All of them conveniently gloss over any true wisdom and spirituality that is actually contained in these scriptures. The golden rule and Jesus' imperative to 'treat the lowest amongst you as if they were Jesus himself' preclude most of the behaviors that readers seek to use the Bible to justify and legitimate.

Junk food tastes good, because it *was* good for you

Junk food, high in fat, calories, sugar, and salt, is not tasty because it's bad for you. They are in fact very good for you, in the amounts that they were typically available over our evolutionary history. The instinctive desire to gorge yourself on any occasional salty, fatty, sweet food you could find would have been be a boon to your survival and reproduction.

The instinct to binge on these foods was highly adapted to the environment we evolved in, the Pleistocene one. Today we need to consciously repress this instinctive desire for salty, fatty, sugary food, simply because the availability of such foods have increased. Today these previously adapted instincts produce obesity, heart-disease, and diabetes, simply as we have too many opportunities to satisfy them.

Over our evolutionary history most children died before reaching reproductive age. Our survival was threatened by under-population. Our instinctive desire to mate was thus adapted to this environment. Today we face the problems of overpopulation. Thus we need to consciously repress this desire.

Proof of 'intelligence', or mere convergence of instinct and adaptive functionality?

The camouflage crab picks and cuts bits of fernery and so on from the ocean floor, and sticks them to hairs on its back and claws, producing the ultimate camouflage. Is this behavior intentional? Does the crab have a real concept of 'camouflage'? Is it a deliberate, planned, and rationally executed strategy? Does the crab behave this way with the 'intention' of 'camouflaging' itself, or are we ascribing this intention to it? Maybe the crab has no idea at all that the behavior is actually functionally adapted, and advantageous. Maybe the motivation for the crab's behavior has nothing to do with camouflage, or anything we might be able to deduce. Perhaps the crab merely enjoys collecting fernery.

We might be surprised at the crab's true motivation. We may be merely ascribing an intention to the crab that complies with our own meanings. Maybe the crab feels pretty. Maybe it is a turn on for the crab, like 'cross dressing'. The crab may be merely behaving automatically and instinctively with no reflection on its own behavior at all. The convergence between the behavior, and the functional adaptability it provides, may justify us in ascribing intelligence to the crab. Based on its behavior, and our own, we have no reason not to. However the convergence between these behaviors and their functional value may be pure coincidence.

In the same way, our own 'intelligence' may in fact be an accumulation of random, coincidentally convergent innate or instinctive behaviors. We accumulate tendencies to respond to particular stimuli, conditions or situations, to react in particular ways to particular things. Where that behavior represented a functional adaptation, it would be reproduced, and added to previously accumulated ones. Such functionally adaptive behaviors would accumulate over billions of years. They would come to constitute a complex and sophisticated package of functionally adaptive behaviors.

The mimic octopus appears to mimic the shape, color, and even movements of other creatures, including snakes, flounders, dragon-fish, and crabs. It appears to 'select' a shape, color, and movement as a tactical response to threats, and as a hunting tactic. This phenomenon once more begs the question of whether to ascribe deliberate intention, or mere convergence of random behaviors to this situation. We must imagine billions of such random behavioral-phenotypes being selected for or against over billions of years. Only those crabs or octopuses or birds with automatic responses 'adapted' to their current environment survived, and those that didn't, became extinct.

One element of the human phenotype is its tendency to collect information, construct or recognize relationships, and therefore 'meanings', which it then uses to predict the probable outcomes of interactions it is observing, and which it can 'imagine' or 'anticipate' might take place in the 'future'. It tends to harness these intelligences about interactions-outcomes in the form of techniques, technologies, and ultimately 'science'.

If we can play a mind experiment, and attempt to see whether our behavior can be seen to fit a 'convergence' model (which for all scientifically intensive purposes it ultimately does), then we may be able to see our behaviors as the mere accumulation of convergences. Selection pressures filter out non-convergence over billions of years of random mutation.

Behaviors which are adapted or adaptive to the environment will, intuitively, tend to accumulate. We are the accumulation of a huge number of 'habits', 'behaviors', cybernetic feedback systems, tendencies, aversions, reactions and automatic responses. Perhaps it is merely our lack of awareness of how our minds operate which produces notions of intention and deliberation.

The Lyrebird can imitate anything, including a chainsaw. Does it have an intention in doing so? Or does it just enjoy mimicking things? Octopuses held in captivity have 'learned' to open jars left in their tanks. If you are tempted to define bird nest-building, beaver dam-building and fish-farming, and insect aphid-farming as pure convergence, then surely the same logic will define most of the behaviors we consider exclusively human, to be no less worthy of being defined in the same way.

Cultural negative selection

Many potential musical compositions emerge as the musician applies protocols they have formally and informally learned. Attempts at producing appealing music result in the emergence of diverse variations of pitch, interval, timing, rhythm, accents, and phrasing. However only a relative few will 'please' the musician or their audience.

Only these will be reproduced, copied by other musicians and reproduced as recordings. They are 'adapted' to their environment. Over time styles and genres of music emerge. They become discretely recognizable forms of musical expression which inform themselves internally rather than externally. Over time they cease to interact with other styles of music, and become 'species' unto themselves. Some of these mutations will be more adapted, more fashionable than their parents, and will come to dominate their environment, or a niche within it.

Some of these mutations will be less adapted to their environments, often unable to survive. In this sense Rock and Pop music has become more popular than the folk, blues, jazz, and classical music that have either emerged alongside them, or actually 'spawned' them. Mutation allows for growing diversity.

The same processes apply to other forms of cultural expression, including painting, drawing, architecture, poetry, and philosophy. The process of evolution applies to social conventions, social structures, social systems, relationships of power, social norms, legal systems, education systems, medical practices, social practices, fashion, music, behavioral norms, religions, philosophies, ethics, morals, and definitions of the nature of things.

The practice of philosophy and other sciences follow their own process of evolution. Negative selection in this process involves the elimination of invalid assumptions and arguments and the practices and systems of relations they inform. Of course many assumptions are successful at reproducing themselves over space-time, geography, and cultures, as they promote the narrow vested interests of the most privileged and powerful.

Many 'invalid' assumptions and arguments survive only because they are 'adapted' to the relations of power, and their reflexive distributions of power, privilege, and benefits. They suit the 'purposes' of those within the beneficiary classes, the dominant groups, the hegemonic elites. What philosophy seeks is to promote holistically enlightened reason as the selective pressure for the filtering of assumptions, arguments, beliefs, ideas, and the practices and systems of relations they inform.

Extinction: a growing trend, or just a temporary fad?

At present it appears that species of flora and fauna are becoming extinct at a faster rate than new species are emerging. This may be a fallacy of composition of time. New species may in fact be emerging that we are unaware of. It may take longer for a 'wave' of new species to emerge, than for the old ones to become extinct. We may be confronted with a wave of new species at any time. These new species may predate us out of existence, or merely steal our trades, our 'niches', by being better adapted than us.

We may in fact be changing the environment in such a way that it confers competitive advantages on our competition.

The emergence of holistic enlightened reason as a dominant determinant

Holistically enlightened reason is an algorithm or determinant which interacts with other algorithms, other determinants. Whether it emerges as a dominant determinant, will be a function of its relative strength. Our current societies are dominated by algorithms such as jealousy, envy, lust, greed, insecurity, pride, various neuroses, and a diverse range of dogma, conditioning, and premature cognitive commitment.

The optimal society will have to be consistent with TROONATNOOR. Dogma must be eliminated. We must do everything in our power to promote holistic justice and equality. This is the prerequisite for a truly meritocratic system which rewards effort, rather than the luck of holistic inheritance. It is opportunities to be rewarded for effort that motivates people to produce value. The optimal society will only produce things of genuine value. The costs and benefits of all decisions would be fairly distributed. This will eliminate many forms of production, many processes, and many institutions. Authentic, holistically informed consent would facilitate the realization of my ambitions for this 'experience engine' we call 'life'.

Convergences regarding the nature of awareness

The last few millennia have produced many conceptualizations of the nature of awareness, with a surprising degree of convergence between metaphysics, physics, and quantum physics. You can study Hinduism, Buddhism, Kabbalah, Hermeticism, Ancient Greek and Islamic Atomism, Scientology, and all the pagan religions that Christianity modeled itself upon, and you will find a clearly resonating convergence regarding the nature of reality. It is the same definition my own speculations have arrived at. Read more in 'Convergences'.

I'm not out to start a new religion. Well in fact there hasn't been a 'new' religion for well over 2500 years. Christianity consists of completely recycled elements of pagan and eastern religions. Islam is more or less the Torah or Old Testament. Scientology is Theosophy and Theravada Buddhism combined with psychoanalysis. Most of what we think of as 'new', is really simply a re-combination of things that came before. This is the true nature of all 'creativity'. It is expressed no less in the table of elements as in the evolution of life. Read more in 'Religion'.

'Morality' as intention

The issue of determining the referents in cost-benefit analyses, that is, whose interests are to be considered in the calculation of costs and benefits, is a prime ethical question. Within a belief system in which all animals were created by some god for his people to exploit, killing a cow to feed a starving family would be seen as a good thing. Of course a more sophisticated and valid approach must consider the interests of all inter-actors, where it can be demonstrated that they have the ability to benefit or suffer as a result of the interaction. As an act will have good and bad outcomes for different referents, it is only the intention of doing a good thing that can be defined as 'moral'.

Virtual reality as an approximation of a truly moral universe

The closest thing to a moral universe would be a virtual one, in which benefits to one actor would not be at a cost to others. All benefits would come at no cost to any other participant in the interactions, or external to them. In Virtual reality any particular individual can have an experience of other individuals without those others being affected. Any individual could satisfy their desires at no cost to any other living thing. This is an ideal 'non Pareto efficient' world. This is the only world in which actions and intentions could be the same thing. There would be no un-intended outcomes and no external costs imposed on third-parties as a result of interactions in which they had not given their 'informed consent'.

The only costs in a virtual world would be opportunity costs for the individual interacting with the virtual world. They would only be able to experience one set of parameters at any particular time. They would therefore sacrifice all the other potential experiences they could have had within that particular time-experience frame. While they are having great sex they will be unable to concentrate on a good novel. They could, however, have great sex while eating chocolate.

Holistically enlightened self-interest as the approximations of 'moral' intention

Evolutionary processes can predict and account for what we are, complex and sophisticated integrations of accumulated adaptive functionalities, a.k.a 'correspondences'. Random mutation together with the direction produced by the potential for mutations to accumulate, and be sorted or distilled by pressures which select for adaptive functionality a.k.a correspondence, can explain our current state of complexity and sophistication.

Can they explain awareness? Of course all propergents must be latent in the primerties, in their initial states, and as such awareness must be latent in the primerties that interacted to produce what we experience, and how we experience it. The knower, the knowledge, and the knowing, are one. This is the basic tenet of Hinduism. There is no creation, or cause and effect. There are only interactions amongst properties that always existed and always will, and the contemporaneous propergents that emerge from them. This may sound teleological, but it isn't. It is, necessarily, holistically 'reflexive'.

Have we come any closer to being able to define awareness? Awareness is the potential to be aware. What does this mean? To be aware is to be able to experience. Given that any propergent is necessarily latent in the primerties, our question might be, at what stage does awareness manifest? Awareness is the potential to be aware. Let us consider what it would mean to be aware of existing, but having no senses to be aware with. Try to imagine that you have no sense of touch, smell, sight, or sound. You are still aware, but of nothing! Here we realize how reflexive awareness is of both mechanisms to be aware with, and things to be aware of.

Quantum mechanics and string theory approximate my own interactions of primerties producing propergents. All experiences are manifestations of the same principles at different levels of accumulation, that is, levels of composition. Composition is accumulation. Conditions and properties are reflexive. Conditions are properties and properties are conditions. Every interactor represents the environment for every other interactor. Every condition represents a set of holistic forces inter-determining how things will inter-act.

Inter-actors reflexively represent, as a whole, the conditions under which they will interact. Particles interact producing forces of a different accumulation or composition than the individual particles alone have. The outcomes of this interaction then determine the behavior of the individual particles in interaction. Everything in the universe exists in reflexivity. I'm sure that nothing in my way of explaining things will contradict anything predicted by quantum theory and string theory, or even Buddhist and Hindu teachings.

Senses represent functional adaptation and correspondence. The more precisely one is able to perceive an environment, the more precise can be the responses to it. The more precise the observations that can be made, the more detailed the relationships, meanings, and patterns that can be constructed. The greater the capacity to store memories of experiences, and the greater the capacity and tendency to compare experiences and distill patterns, relationships, and meanings, from these memories, the greater the ability to construct meanings. All of these things produce greater correspondences between behaviors and the behaviors which promote survival and reproduction. As they increase in complexity and sophistication they produce greater correspondence with a complex environment. Sophistication allows subtlety. It allows precision. The more precise your actions correspond to actions which ensure success, the greater your correspondence. Evolution is a process of ever closer approximations to correspondence.

It is logical that all of these tendencies and properties will accumulate collectively. The emergence of a mutation providing potential for correspondence will have no value until a facilitative feature emerges with which to exploit that potential. The ability to make observations becomes more valuable within the context of being able to store and recall such impressions, and priceless in the context of being able to compare and contrast impressions, and construct relationships and meanings. Thus within certain contexts certain forms will provide their possessor with competitive advantages that, in a competitive environment defined by relative scarcity, will provide evolution with a

direction, by favoring the reproduction of certain forms and instincts which are holistically convergent with functionality.

Some features may remain latent and be irrelevant until their respective holistic reflexive context, their facilitative cohorts of forms and instincts, emerge. Brains with no inputs of sensory impressions would provide no value, and not be selected for, until forms of senses emerged. The nervous system is advantageous as a whole. This of course all occurs randomly. The direction towards accumulation emerges from the functional adaptation that accumulated random mutations represent. They provide advantages to the host organism. In the case of inanimate forces and patterned regular conditions, they reproduce relatively stable conditions, rather than falling prey to atrophy, disorder, chaos. A stable weather feature or recurring seasons are examples of such conditions.

The capacities to sense, store, compare, seek and find patterns, and therefore achieve greater correspondence with the interactive environment, will accumulate over billions of years. What we can observe today, and how we observe it, is the product of up to 4 Billion years of the accumulation of these capacities. They necessarily exist together, as their value only emerges as a whole. Eyes without brains produce little advantage. Brains without eyes, ears, noses, and the connection to a nervous system providing tactile sensing, have little value. You are unlikely to find a creature with a huge capacity for seeking out relationships and constructing meaning in a creature without the sensory inputs to do so. The brain would prove a liability rather than an asset. It would require energy to produce and maintain, but would provide no functional adaptation, no advantage. It would prove a liability.

Remember evolution has no 'moral' direction. Holistically enlightened self-interest would only be reproduced if it represented adaptive functionality. Holistically enlightened self-interest would either have to provide competitive advantages to its possessors, or find a niche where it could develop independent of its competition. Otherwise it could have no future. A truly moral organism could never enjoy correspondence or convergence with an amoral universe. However an approximation of what a moral universe might look like, might in principal emerge from an a-moral one. This is the vision of the 'moral' philosopher? This is the vision embodied in my Protocols. I am seeking a principle driven transformation of my world motivated by holistically enlightened self-interest

At least in its early stages, any society based on my protocols will have to develop its own niche. In this way this branch of the histories of the human race can evolve on its own terms. The challenges to it would come from the wider society's potential to destroy the entire ecosystem in which this niche exists. It would of course need to protect its sovereignty from the wider society's. This would impose some costs and constraints on the development of the community, as it would need to invest some of its resources and energies on non-productive defense functions. It would, however, increase the sense of community and solidarity, and provide community building dynamics. The common threat could unite people, and distract them from their differences.

Holistic enlightenment is a form of awareness. It emerges reflexively with the accumulation of impressions and the distillation of these experiences into patterns of relationship and meaning. As such schemata, noetic structures, emerge. These are compressions of information into principles which both focus attention, and motivate behavior.

We become aware of certain patterns in human behavior and seek to optimize them. We first become vaguely aware of relationships, and then seek to clarify and define them more precisely, to make them transparent. Our awareness of these relationships and patterns then motivates us to seek to exclusively promote particular relationships and to eliminate others. We identify the costs and benefits of particular patterns of interaction, and then seek to optimize the benefits, by optimizing the forms of the interactions. We will encourage the expression of some instincts, and the conscious self and societal regulation of others. We would ultimately seek to arrive at an awareness, within every member of our society, of the benefits of holistically enlightened principle driven patterns of interaction over the costs of patterns of opportunistic exploitation of inherited inequality.

The whole process is holistic, iterative, accumulative, and reflexive. Properties interact to produce conditions which promote particular types of interactions which produce particular properties, which go on reflexively, and interactively, to produce particular conditions which favor particular systems of relations and definitions.

Awareness itself has no values or properties. Only in interaction with other properties does it accumulate any values or properties. Awareness is the potential to be aware of impressions. Only where an accumulation of senses exist, does the property awareness have any meaning or value. In this sense it is the potential for awareness that is a primerty. The potential is valueless and meaningless in the absence of reflexive relationships with impressions to be aware of.

The potential for awareness is universal in every particle, and therefore atom, element, compound, mineral, every form of energy-matter. The experience of being aware of something emerges from interactions. This awareness of exists epiphenomenally and contemporaneously with those interactions. Once the interactions cease to reproduce themselves, and maintain the integrity of the conditions under which this particular awareness of emerges, the awareness of ceases to have any meaning or value. It no longer exists. Awareness of is epiphenomenal. It exists as part of a cohort of conditions. It is holistically reflexive of this cohort. However the potential for awareness per se is eternal, unchanging. It always was and always will be. It is. It is universal. It is a property of every particle (or wave). It is a property of every manifestation of energy.

It is only the awareness of that is epi-phenomenal. Awareness of is an experience that is contemporaneous with the presence of 'sensory perception', nervous systems, cybernetic feedback systems, inherited 'preferences' and definitions, cultural conditioning and so on.

Awareness of is a property of particular conditions, and not a property in and of itself. Awareness emerges contemporaneously with particular conditions. It is an epiphenomena. It has no substance of its own at all. How is that for a revelation? You become aware, and then later you cease to be aware, and that is the reality of our existence. That is the nature of our reality.

However it is only your-self that dies. The fear you have of losing yourself is a product of your identification with your-self. But your self is not you. You are an eternal, unchanging, always was, always will be, potential for experience. Ask any genuine Jain, Buddhist, Hindu, or Hare Krishna. Read 'Religion' for details.

Of course the reality of our natures is that we will seek to deny this. Our ego experiences a set of very unpleasurable sensations and feelings at the prospect of its looming disintegration. Hence most of our superstitious religious dogma, myths, and mysticism. See 'Convergences' for details.

Accumulation

Reality accumulates. Energy-force accumulates into elemental particles and their associated forces. These elemental particles and forces accumulate and produce the table of elements, which accumulate into compounds, which accumulate into organized integrated units, which accumulate into more complex and sophisticated units. The elemental forces interact and accumulate to produce more complex forces. Earlier in our discussion I used the term gravity to refer to the forces of attraction.

Now I will use the term force of accumulation to refer to that property or condition by which primerties are attracted to each other, and accumulate. As we know, accumulations tend to grow, as they attract more stuff, and reproduce their conditions over space-time, producing periods of relative order or stability. As long as the conditions reproduce themselves, they will continue over space-time. Stability refers to the maintenance or endurance of conditions over space time. However any particular condition itself does not persist over space time as a stable unit. It merely re-produces itself, replicates itself, and in doing so produces space-time. At the point at which it ceases to reproduce its conditions it ceases to exist.

'To he that has, even more shall be given. From he that has little, even that little which he has shall be taken away'.

The balance apparent in any system at any particular time is, however, not a stable condition. At any moment mutations can emerge which significantly change the interactive environment, or other features of the environment can be radically impacted, say by a meteor impact. A meteor is as much a mutation as the earth is. They are both part of a greater whole. The apparent human dominance of the food chain can easily be challenged.

We forget that we are the habitat for various micro-organisms and viruses. They live off us. They are in fact at the top of the food chain. At any time any of these organisms can randomly mutate faster than our immune systems can respond. The plagues of the past could easily return. There is no guarantee that humans will even manage to survive until the sun explodes, which is unlikely to favor humans.

Popular language *mis*-usage, and the notions of Function, purpose and meaning

It is common to refer to properties of particular species as existing to serve a function. We observe that particular properties provide the members of a species with particular advantages. Being a particular color in a particular environment can act as camouflage. This is a real asset. You can sneak up on prey easier, and you won't be seen so easily by predators out to eat you.

You would survive and reproduce and your offspring would become plentiful. An observer might wonder at how well you appear to be 'adapted' to your environment. A 'creationist' would be amazed at how well god had 'designed' you. A functionalist would wonder at how well you have managed to 'adapt' to your environment. Clever you, what a good idea, you decided that you'd best change your color to match that of your environment! Of course they never actually state this, but it is implicit in all they say. Functionalists, which includes most of the television scientists, continue to rave over how you grew long ears to hear better, or longer legs to run faster, and so on.

It's really irritating. The implication is that 'species' deliberately evolve, or that some guiding hand evolves them.

However the fact is that only adapted species are present today as the others got eaten, or starved to death. We only get to see the winners. The losers were filtered out through a cruel and amoral process of negative selection. It can appear as if the world is defined by harmony and synergy. However it only looks that way from within the teleological loops of creationism and functionalism. Evolution is a process of negative selection, and not forward thinking design-work on the part of 'species' or some creator.

Birds do not have wings in order to fly. Rather, they are able to fly because they have wings. Coming into an environment at a particular point in time we find exclusively well adapted animals, as if part of some well-conceived and benevolent design. This has encouraged invalid language usages. These language usages naturalize functionalist notions of purpose and design. They go on to further naturalize general popular language culture concepts in which things have 'causes', meanings, and functions. They appear to be part of some design, plan or purpose. Who designed and planned it? Why? The situation produces, ultimately, notions of creation, God, and a 'meaning of life'.

It is only when we fully comprehend the nature of evolution that we can fully and unequivocally dismiss such specious sophistry. The theory of evolution, when precisely employed, makes creationist myths, gods, and functionalist obfuscations (deliberate or unintended), obsolete, redundant, and unnecessary.

The weak anthropocentric principal is the argument that the world appears to be suitable for our existence and even sometimes even pleasure, and therefore something must have created it with that function in mind. This argument is only compelling within a teleological, circular set of assumptions or interpretations. It is only compelling from within the loop. An understanding of the nature of evolution allows us to dismiss these arguments as non-compelling, possibly disingenuous, specious sophistry. It will allow us to escape the cycles of the loop!

Generally pervasive misuse of language produces an insidious corruption of reasoning. Problematic language formulations mystify and obfuscate, deliberately and unconsciously. They do not attract interrogation, as the corruption is at such a subtle, basic, level, that it is hard to pin down without concentrated effort and intellectual rigor. Problematic concepts interact with one another in the popular language culture in such a way that they give rise to or support invalid ideas and beliefs. Beliefs and ideas interact with each other in this way, giving rise to problematic and invalid belief systems, social realities, and social systems. They become so naturalized as to escape attention, and therefore interrogation.

Meaning is a case in point. It is the progenitor of many invalid populist language usages. We are not referring to the case in which we ask, what is the meaning of a word, in which meaning refers to convention and definition. This is known as synthetic truth. It is purely reflexive, circular or teleological. We assign meanings to words, and then use them by convention. A cat is a cat because we agree to call it a cat.

What we are interested in here is the functionalist case of meaning, in which questions about the ultimate purpose, plan, reason, or intention behind life, the universe, and everything, are formulated.

The problematic question why is used in such formulations. When we ask someone why they did something, we are asking for reasons, for their intentions. Religious belief systems are, iteratively and reflexively, the ultimate expression and product of problematic functionalist ideas and language formulations. Functionalists and theists rely on the populist notions of creation, function, and intention, to promote the idea of life having a purpose, a reason, a meaning. Without such assumptions, ultimate questions of meaning cannot be formulated.

The ultimate question can only be formulated using teleological, reflexive, functionalist theistic language formulations which have corrupted the popular language culture, and which are nonsensical, or, if you like, have no meaning. Questions about the nature of life, the universe, and everything, can only productively and validly be formulated in terms of the interactions of algorithms and the properties and conditions that emerge as a product, outcome, or consequence of these interactions.

A fish's gills mean it can breathe underwater. A fish does not have gills in order to breathe underwater. A bird's wings allow it to fly. A bird does not have wings in order to fly. The difference between the statements are not at all subtle to interrogators. Interrogators are familiar with the big picture, and the way in which statements, apparently harmless as individual items, in summation and interaction produce dangerously misleading social realities, and the hegemony of invalid belief systems. The trick of sophistry is to selectively consider particular language usages in isolation, where they can be defined as harmless. That no idea exists in isolation is the key wisdom of the interrogator. The interrogator must consider things holistically.

We must consider the irony built into populist 'scientific' language, as often expressed in television wildlife documentaries. The television scientist commonly refers to instinct in the passive sense, but evolution in the active sense. I am talking about the language used. The language used, whether with this intention or not, seems to suggest, well in fact states, that animals do not think or learn, but they do deliberately evolve characteristics favorable to survival and reproduction.

Whether that is the intention of the presenter, and whether the informed viewer interprets these statements other than they are presented, I can't say. However that is the language adopted in most popular television documentaries. Species are talked about as if they exist as anything other than an artifact. A 'species' cannot 'adapt' any more than it can do anything, as it does not exist. It is a human concept, and artifact of our need to categorize things. And an individual animal cannot 'adapt' in the sense of grow wings or gills or humps. It inherits these things. It only has the potential to adapt in a behavioral sense.

And in fact, when we analyze the nature of 'instinct' rigorously, we will find that even behaviors are inherited. Any synergistic or functional value of a behavior is pure coincidence, what I call 'convergence'. I've never read any analysis of 'instinct' anywhere. I somehow managed to 'deduce' or extrapolate it by applying the general principles of evolution to behavior.

From within the functionalist-creationists ideological position, from within the loop of its assumptions, the use of the term 'adapt' as a verb, and applying the term 'instinct' to only 'automatic' behaviors, is necessary to reflexively maintain internal consistency within the functionalist-creationist's position, and the ideologies they 'inform' and/or are reflexive products of. Remember that all definitions exist interdependently, and reflexively. They must produce some degree of 'internal consistency' within the teleological loops.

Every argument and assumption more or less re-iteratively reinforces every other argument or assumption. This is how 'social reality' can seem so compelling. Within the 'social reality' there appears no reason to even interrogate the hegemonic definitions. They simply appear 'natural'. Reflexively they are consistent. One hand washes the other, as one lie supports another, produces, and reproduces many more.

The effect of all this hegemonic-popular-language is to imply that non-humans experience life qualitatively differently from humans. Human behavior is defined as intentional and deliberate, a product of free-will. Other animals are defined as merely acting instinctively. Through such defining practices the convention of using adaptation as a verb becomes institutionalized.

The T.V presenter announces that birds developed larger wings and lighter bodies over 1000s of years so that they could fly longer distances. However we are 'informed' that their nest building activities are purely instinctive. Animal behavior must reflexively be defined as instinct to maintain humanity's superiority. Evolution must be guided by a purpose, to harmonize it, to reconcile it, with creationism.

Humans are less queasy exploiting 'dumb' animals than intelligent ones. The more like us an animal is, the more problematic we find eating it to be. Whales are more like us than tuna. Many people will happily chow down on a tuna fish while getting morally self-righteous and emotive about the tragedy of whaling.

The clumsy brutality of evolution must be re-defined by functionalists and theistic creationists as clever, positive, and purposeful, to reconcile it with their social reality of creationism, meaning, synergy, planning, and purpose.

I am not saying that all television presenters are consciously conspiring together. What I am arguing for is more precision in language usage, to avoid unconsciously and unintentionally promoting functionalist-creationist, fundamentally 'theistic' definitions of reality. Of course many so-called 'apologetists' amongst the media and scientific communities are happy for the obfuscative, mystifying impact of imprecise language usage.

Once in an economics lecture someone joked that when reality contradicts our economic theories, we tend to reject reality as inconvenient. Economic theories are excellent examples of the teleology of reflexive assumptions constructing circular loops. Within the 'modeled' reality, the theories seem to represent the external reality they are meant to model.

However once you 'relax' the assumptions, and make them more like the complex reality they are meant to model, the models fall apart, and lose their explanatory and predictive potential. I had planned to wear a 'fairy' costume to my last economics lecture. Most economic theories are, like fairies, figments of human imagination.

As George Bernard Shaw once quipped: 'If all economists were laid end to end, they would not reach a conclusion'.

Interrogation, bringing transparency, forces theists into 'revising their epistemology', in an attempt to reconcile irrefutable primary realities with their personal secondary reality. Their secondary realities have, in the meantime, become social reality, through their hegemony.

Reformed epistemology was Thomas Aquinas' attempt to claim that you can build a whole belief system upon pure assumptions and still claim to be intellectually rigorous. Aquinas' reformed epistemology, is, however, mere disingenuous specious sophistry. His arguments were of course viewed favorably by the church, which rewarded him with a sainthood. If they could raise his personal status and credibility, then his arguments would automatically be granted the transferred authority of a 'Saint'. His arguments fully supported the church and its privileges, so by declaring him a 'Saint', they granted their own definitions and systems of relations 'transferred authority', and therefore greater legitimacy. People have to be dead before they can be 'Sainted'. It does them no good. The Church 'Saints' people for its own benefit.

The concept of beginnings and an end

A significant element of religion is the concept of a beginning and an end. The concept is a function of, is iterative and reflexive of, our experience of birth, life and death. The universe, consistent with this, will, we assume, have had a beginning, creation, and will have an end, Armageddon. These concepts interact with the concepts of cause and effect, and interpretations of big bang theories.

Arguments about the nature of the universe are more validity formulated using the language of primerties and propergents, of interactions and their products, their outcomes.

The basic primerties out of which the universe is constituted have always existed, and will always exist. Primerties may interact, and constitute nominal epiphenomenal change, but they are, were, and always will be. The ideas of creation and Armageddon, beginning and end, are an example of the fallacy of composition. The fallacy in this case is that primerties experience what propergents do. We are, as humans, unable to observe the ebb and flow, the continual cycles of expansion and contraction of the universe implicit and explicit in modern physics.

Neither are we able to observe the alternative, of universal evolution, spawning new, mutated forms and algorithms. We are unable to observe anything over such immense time spans. The nature of the universe, of the relations between constantly emerging, epi-phenomenal propergents, may be ever 'changing', but the primerties and their algorithms will remain constant. The closest the biblical religions come to reality is in having to assume that their God always was, and always will be. God would have to be a primerty.

The evolution of science from pure superstition to mono-theism, to intellectually rigorous 'scientific method' based science, will correspond with the evolution of primal forces from gods, to one god, to my 'primal property', my 'propergent'. God must simply be, in the same way that primerties are.

It is noteworthy that Judaeo-Christianity, with its vale of tears philosophy, anticipates and even welcomes the idea of Armageddon. The end of the only world we have is longed for, in expectation of a vague but inspiring world to come. It is this sort of reasoning that is counter-productive to optimizing our management of our actual present lives.

The 'church' has a history of opposing most scientific endeavor, and most social reforms aimed at greater justice and social democracy. Even our 'protesting' Luther demonized the peasants and their demands for greater equality, economic, and social justice. He recommended the use of brutal violence to oppose their quest for the sort of justice Jesus spoke of. Our social progress has been achieved despite the church and religion, rather than due to religion. Every god I know of, according to their spokespeople (in modern times exclusively men), supports slavery, rape, murder, genocide, opportunistic exploitation, racism, sexism, and homophobia.

Read the 'holy' books yourself and see. I mean really 'read' them from cover to cover. Anyone who posits organized religion as being a positive influence on our human development is naive and/or ignorant, and/or just plain living in revisionist denial. I was appalled to read that a certain Habermas claimed that the Catholic Church was responsible for everything good about western civilization.

The big bang theory

If the Universe is expanding, as physics seems to compellingly argue, and may contract, that does not reflect any 'creation', it is merely a description about how the primerties of the universe are interacting. The big bang can be considered as a stage in the constant transition of propergents as they interact. Like ourselves, as integrated systems of things with particular properties, the universe may dis-integrate, and of course this would mean the end of it as we define it, but only in that sense can it end or begin. Remember, atrophy and order can only be ascribed to arbitrarily defined or discretionary wholes over discrete time frames. Only in this sense can anything be conceived or die.

Epiphenomena emerge as 'distinct', integrated entities, relative to our perception, and then dis-integrate. In the case of big bangs, we would have a singularity exploding, expanding, reaching some point of equilibrium, contracting, and eventually imploding at the end of the cycle, to the point of a singularity, a black hole. The singularity then divides into parts, which interact to produce space and time, and therefore an expanding universe.

If the universe will collapse, then this might suggest that the primerty explosively divides into a discrete number of units, whose interactions would produce an ultimate 'limit' at which the universe would reverse and contract. The primerties would all resonate at the same frequency, perhaps slow to a conceptual point of stability, and then explosively begin resonating and interacting again.

In this model, the universe ultimately reaches some point at which it begins imploding, until it reduces back to the primerties, a conceptual point of spaceless-timeless zero interaction, containing all the energy in the universe. Of course we are talking about cycles. The primerty is not stable. It interacts with itself and produces space-time once more, and a cycle of expansions and contractions, towards and away from, the singularity, the primerties. It is like the 'moving' equilibriums' which seem to define economic cycles.

Equilibrium per se does not appear to be a natural state, as 'life' seems to be defined by dynamics, by potentials, by excess and shortage, by positive and negative charges, by demand and over-supply, and so on. Equilibrium is merely a conceptual state, rather than an 'event'. The conceptual point of equilibrium is that point that cycles move through as they go from positive to negative, as the curve climbs, peaks, falls, bottoms-out, and begins climbing once again.

Reflexivity and arbitrary definitions of evolution and science

Some scientists argue that we should not 'play' god, or meddle with evolution. This represents a total failure to recognize, or ability to accommodate, the reality that we are both the current progeny of evolution, and a proponent of evolution. We are the actors resulting from, and the agencies of, evolution. Evolution is not some form of external god that executes plans for us. Evolution is an open ended question or process. You cannot validly formulate a statement in which one thing is the 'active' agency of evolution, and another is a passive 'product'. All participants in evolution are 'participants' in the process of evolution. They are interactively-determinant.

Evolution has no more an independent intention than we do, as products of that evolution. It is scientifically arbitrary to define one part of the universe as god, as cause, as evolution, and the rest as the effects.

When we become active in evolution, we are merely behaving as a component of evolution, in the same way as water and wind erode stone, as a consequence of their natures. We are a part of the whole. When we begin to manipulate genes we are merely acting as agents of evolution. Our inherited nature is to pursue technological advance in order to improve our life experiences. This is evolution. The will we inherit is 'god'. That will defines the universal will. Any distinction between our actions and evolution or god is scientifically arbitrary.

TROONATNOOR ON DETERMINISM

Free as the wind? Free as a bird?

'Free as the wind' is a revealing misnomer, as the wind is completely at the mercy of pressure differentials. Masses of air flow from high pressure to low pressure, or, if you like, get sucked-in. Yes it is true, wind 'sucks'. The answer is thus 'sucking', rather than 'blowing', in the wind. Further, birds spend their time desperately seeking food and shelter. They are constantly at the mercy of the elements, and the slave to their hunger.

As such they hardly express any real ideal of 'freedom'.

Free will?

Alien Arm syndrome is a condition in which people cannot control the actions of their own arms. Their arms act contrary to their own wills. This becomes a problem when they go shopping. Their arms pick up things without the person wanting to. This is simply a clearer example of the absence of free will that defines our existence.

Action algorithm

Motive + opportunity – constraints/deterrents/risks/consequences = action.

Interactive-determinism and the illusion of free will

It is necessary to be able to formulate the concept of interactive-determinism meaningfully as it relates to our human experience. The illusion of free will is iteratively reflexive of the hegemonic system of relations and ways of defining. We must ask 'who benefits' from this illusion. Without free will there could be no sin, and no need for redemption from it. The priests are the main beneficiaries of sin. Read 'Religion' for more details.

I have discussed the arguments of Hume, Hobbes, Freud, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer and many others, concerning the illusion of free will, in 'Convergences'. We have the illusion of free will. We mistake the freedom to act on our wills, to satisfy our desires, with free will. However we cannot choose what we desire. As our wills are determined by our desires, and we cannot choose what we genuinely desire, our will is determined, and not free.

Should interactive determinism equate to fatalism? Fatalism is a psychological property.

Like David Hume reminded us, our psychology will determine our behavior more than our intellectual recognition of the nature of reality. Some of us may become 'cheerful' fatalists. Many of us already are, as affiliates of religions. However how we respond to the information regarding interactive determinism will be interactively determined. It will depend on every other property in the universe. The simple awareness of the nature of interactive determinism itself will not produce fatalism, any more than the knowledge of our own certain deaths in the near future motivate us to give up living.

Intentions are manifested latencies, the products of algorithmic processes, rather than the expression of a 'free' will. They are determined by genetic and cultural inheritances. Interactive determinism can empower us to reject inherited definitions according to experience and reason, and to construct new, more valid and efficacious ones, in terms of producing more optimal life experiences. There is no free will, but we shall consider that this is hardly significant, as it is our experience of life that determines the quality of our life, not whether or not we have free will.

It is often the case that the achievement of our desired objectives does not bring the desired satisfaction, or even worse, actually leads to problems and suffering. As Oscar Wilde said 'When the gods want to punish us they give us what we pray for'.

Alternatively, often we are dismayed with a failure to be able to impose our wills, only to experience totally unexpected satisfactions and successes as a result. Attaining our will is, therefore, problematic, given that we cannot predict what outcomes will be experienced as a result. In this sense, we should not feel so urgent or frustrated in achieving what we want. Often the best outcomes or experiences are imposed on us. In hindsight we are often grateful that our will was not done, that we didn't achieve or get what we wanted. This should ameliorate the impact of the revelations of the nature of interactive-determinism.

The most rigorously articulated conventional concept of 'free will' is the freedom to choose from the possibilities that are known to us. Our 'choice', our 'rationality' is merely limited or 'bounded'. However the notion that we make decisions is an illusion. Our decisions are an artifact or product of the interactions between our own natures, our innate and learned definitions, and the natures of the things we are interacting with.

Let us consider an actor at a crossroads. They can stay put, go back, go left, or go right, or walk off across the fields. Let us picture the actor's 'decision-making apparatus' as a sort of set of balances or scales. On these scales lies the total 'noetic structure' of the actor, their personal reality made up of how they define and experience things. The crossroads represents a situation or set of relationships and information.

In the interaction between the actor's 'noetic structure', and the primary reality represented by the crossroads, including all the visual, audio, and sensory information which makes up that situation, all the associations and memories of similar situations, all the dreams, ambitions, desires, past experiences of success and

failure, and so on, there will be something about the left or right alternative which unbalances the scales in one direction, either left or right. This will lead the actor to arrive at a conclusion, which the ego defines as its choice.

Any equilibrium or balance of these scales will usually be a temporal anomaly. Eventually some component of the algorithm of the interaction will generate a preference. Decisions decisions! Where this 'decision' is not consciously arrived at, the actor may claim to have behaved arbitrarily, however in fact something about the situation, the interaction between their innate nature, their personal subjective reality, and the primary reality, tipped the balance in one direction. That this reason may not be apparent to us, or the actor, does not make it any less interactively-deterministic.

In 'The Quark and the Jaguar', Dawkins argues that 'humans probably act on hidden motives not 'spotlighted' by our narrow beam of consciousness'. Psycho-cybernetics also demonstrates that most of our actions are produced 'unconsciously'. Our simplest movements would be impossible to consciously and deliberately co-ordinate. This is one reason why we tend to move awkwardly and clumsily when we are self-conscious of our actions. Most of our 'calculations' and co-ordinations of actions take place 'out of the sight of' our 'consciousness'.

In 'Shadows of the mind', Penrose explains how any act of conscious 'free will' must be pure illusion, based on the findings of research in the field of cognitive science. People subjectively feel that an action and the conscious initiation' of it take place simultaneously. In fact any conscious action is, according to Penrose, instigated 1 to 1.5 seconds before the person perceives that they have 'initiated' it. The consciousness appears to be taking credit for initiating an action that was in fact non-consciously initiated by the brain 1 to 1.5 seconds earlier.

The brain appears to process information, input it into its algorithms, compare it to stored data, construct relationships and meanings or definitions, and then output decisions. This is done non-consciously. The decision is in reality made at a level we are not conscious of, or aware of. The action used in studies was that of bending a finger. It appears that we take credit for 'decisions' that are actually made elsewhere. While our subjective experience is that we feel that we actually make decisions, and carry out 'deliberate' actions as and when we decide on them, such research indicates that this is an illusion.

Neuro-scientist Benjamin Libet conducted experiments in the 1980s in which he asked participants to report the position of the second hand of a clock at the moment they had consciously 'decided' to flick their wrists. At the same time he measured their brain activity, in particular the build-up of electrical signals in the brain known as 'the readiness potential'. Libet found that unconscious brain activity leading up to a conscious decision by the subject to flick their wrist began approximately half a second before the subject was aware of having consciously initiated the action.

This meant the action must have been initiated non-consciously half a second before the person had become aware of a conscious decision to act. The person was therefore claiming to have initiated an action that had already been initiated. Their subjective sense of 'free will' was an illusion. In further studies, Haggard and Eimer asked subjects to decide not only when to move their hands, but also to decide which hand to move.

Ammon and Gandevia found that right-handed people would normally choose to move their right hand 60% of the time, but when the right hemisphere was magnetically stimulated they would instead choose their left hand 80% of the time. They therefore discovered that it is possible to influence which hand people would move by stimulating the left or right hemispheres of the subject's brains. Later experiments by Alvaro Pascual-Leone and colleagues independently duplicated these findings.

In all these studies the subjects felt that they were exerting their 'free-will' in deciding when to 'randomly' flick their wrists, and in which hand they would freely 'chose' to move. The measurements demonstrated unequivocally the impossibility of their subjectively perceived experience, their 'subjective reality'. The research indicates that we retrospectively take responsibility for initiating actions that have already been decided for us. In this way we 'construct' our sense of free will. We consciously define the outputs of non-conscious computations as the products of our 'free will'.

Neuro-scientists Gazzing and Sperry ('Psychology' Wortman and Loftus 1992) present the following case. When surgeons cut the 'corpus callosum' joining the right and left cerebral hemispheres, each hemisphere acted independently of the other. They acted as if they were in fact two separate individuals.

They asked the person to close their right eye, then showed them a card with the command 'walk' which they read with their left eye, and thus with the right side of brain. The person got up and walked out of the room. The neuro scientists then asked the person why they were walking. The left hemisphere, which was no longer connected to the right hemisphere, had no idea why it was walking. It was not aware of the command written on the card.

However, rather than admitting this, or simply saying that an urge had come over them, the Left hemisphere instead constructed what it thought would be a fitting motive. It said it was thirsty, and was going to get a drink. As such it merely ascribed itself an intention that it never had. It took responsibility for an action whose motive was generated elsewhere. You might say it ascribed itself a free will. It denied that the right hemisphere had willed the body to walk.

They also showed this person different cue cards. They showed their right eyes (connected to the left hemisphere of their brain) a picture of a chicken. They showed their left eye (connected to the right hemisphere of their brain), a picture of snowfall. They then asked, using written questions posed to the respective eye of each hemisphere, to choose another picture of what goes with which picture, each using a different hand, the opposite hand to each hemisphere. Their left hand picked a claw, and the right picked a shovel. This would equate to a chicken claw, and a shovel for shovel moving snow. But when the left hemisphere was asked why it had chosen these two cards, it answered 'oh, that's simple. The chicken claw goes with the chicken, and you need a shovel to clean out the chicken shed'.

This revealed so much about human nature that the theories of psychologists, sociologists, and philosophers such as Hume, have long anticipated. This was one of the few chances scientists have had to observe the usually 'secret' operations of the mind in relation to spin-doctoring, cognitive dissonance, denial, and the construction of subjective reality.

As Freud wrote "our conscious minds do not control how we act but merely tell us a story about our actions." This is what Hume argued. This is what the Post-Modernists tell us today. We 'own' wills which are not our own. We fabricate our secondary reality via post-retrospective-revisionism, to make sense of our actions. We fabricate our sense of the 'meanings' of our actions. In reality we do not know the origin of our motives, we do not know the origin of our 'will'. We merely rationalize our emotions, our actions, our motives, our desires. We construct meaningful narratives to satisfy our desire for a self, and a world, that makes sense.

Consideration of the following neurological dis-orders may provide some real insights. People with Tourette syndrome and related tic disorders make involuntary movements and utterances. They can control them for up to a number of hours, but they will then be 'expressed' much more violently. The clinical definition of alien hand syndrome includes a 'feeling that one limb is foreign or has a will of its own, together with observable involuntary motor activity' This syndrome is often a result of damage to the corpus callosum, either when it is severed to treat intractable epilepsy or due to a stroke. People with schizophrenia sometimes report that they did not initiate, or will, the actions they performed.

My own arguments about the illusory nature of free will anticipated such a situation. Free will is an illusion no matter which level you look at it. What we are left to ponder is the nature of awareness.

A positive consequence of recognizing the determinism of our holistic inheritances

Once we recognize the absence of free will we can be expected to become more accepting and forgiving, and less arrogant about our own good fortune, perhaps even more generous with it. In fact Mohamed, in the Koran, recognized this. See 'Religion' for details. If we took random new-births as an article of faith, we would then devote more of our energies to investing in eternity. Once we accept that the universe produces no justice, and has no interest in us, we will be able to produce whatever level of justice we want in our systems of relations and definitions. When we are freed of the dogma we have inherited, including theism, anthropocentrism, functionalism, and intelligent design, we will find our true response-ability, and use our intelligences to design a world in which we take on the response-ability we once ascribed to gods.

Determinism and *co*-experiencing being you

Determinism means no there is no problem imagining millions of 'awareness units' all experiencing the same 'experience engine'. Billions of 'awareness units' could be experiencing being me right now, in the same way I experience being me. I feel I am pursuing my will. Part of my brain tricks me into identifying with the motives, the 'will' of this experience engine I think of as 'Markus'. As I am really a passenger, there is no reason why billions of other awareness units could not be taking same ride. The angst, anxiety, and worry associated with apparent 'decision making', all provide the 'passengers' with a sense of ownership of this will and the decision making process. This, and the pleasure and pain which are the consequences of decisions, of acting upon desires, competing 'wills', produce an identification with the experience engine. This 'complete immersion' makes the experience more satisfying and real, even when it is producing dis- satisfaction.

Personal revelations regarding determinism and the illusion of free will

I surprised myself when I finally came to comprehend the nature of determinism. I had always had the need to be cause, to act, rather than to merely re-act. I needed to achieve something on my own, something that was my own achievement. I wanted the peace of mind that comes with feeling that you have something of value to contribute, that you are of value. I had often considered the idea of cheating fate, if it existed, by deliberately acting opposite to what fate had in mind. I could arbitrarily turn left at a road when I had intended, as fate had dictated for me, to turn right. Or could I?

I wouldn't know if that was what fate had in fact intended for me. I had to accept that I couldn't know. But it was only after continuing to rewrite the beginning drafts of what was to become Socrates' cat, and then this manuscript, that the nature of determinism became apparent to me. I didn't want it. I tried to find a way around it. I tried to argue my way out of it. Only after fighting with it did I come to accept it, and not to fear it anymore, not to define it in the conventionally negative way.

It is uncanny how so many things I had experienced and/or reflected on should have made determinism clear to me so much earlier. Of course they must have contributed to the development of my awareness of the nature of determinism at a non-conscious level. I remember considering that it was silly to torture myself for having made bad decisions. I recognized that I had made the best decisions I could at the time under the prevailing conditions. I wouldn't deliberately have made bad decisions. Even if such decisions were unconsciously deliberate, I was not conscious of this fact. Thus there was no reasonable grounds to agonize over my past failings. I had done the best I had been aware of being able to do.

As I write this I have not yet recovered from a recent series of decisions that, in hindsight, proved to be very bad, costly, decisions for me. I am reminded in this respect of David Hume's comments that even though he was intellectually certain that cause and effect relationships were only psychological, he could only live in that objective reality for a maximum of one hour at a time. For the most part our psychology is the dominant determinant. It is the result of millions of years of 'selective pressures'. Intellectual reason has a fairly recent history in evolutionary terms. This may account for the dominance of our 'reactions' and 'impulses', our reflexive responses.

Even though I am aware that decisions are determined, it doesn't stop me torturing myself for having made, in hindsight, some very poor ones. This is a significant awareness. What is the value of philosophy if our psychology, our emotions, override our rational faculties? Of course it is only one of the many interactive determinants. We can employ some of our motives, our desires, our reason, to engineer systems in which we can minimize the costs or impacts of the less desirable parts of our human nature.

We can remove some temptations rather than being left to deal with the consequences of impulsively acting on them. We can predict our behavior and modify our environments to compensate for them. We can move telegraph poles. We can provide alternate outlets for the expression of some parts of our nature that are not socially productive or desirable. I refer to these as 'speed humps'.

Instead of living in a culture of denial where our natures are forced to express themselves not-consciously, often with huge costs, we can produce 'safer' 'controlled' environments that facilitate their expression with the lowest costs or damage. We can build racing tracks for testosterone plagued youths and adults to 'test their limits' and take controlled risks, without the externalities of 'innocent' victims on our public roads. Let aggressive people knock each other out in war games, rather than lead us to slaughter. Limit the potential for abuses of wealth, power and privilege by limiting access to individual, private, wealth, power and privilege.

Now back to my earlier reflections. One of the most obvious experiences, in hindsight, was when I watched a television program which reported that the most popular wedding ring design for the year in which I had planned to get married was 'channel set diamonds', and the most popular wedding location was Bali. That same year I had made what I thought at the time to be the unusual, and I flatter myself to say uniquely 'tasteful', choice of a channel set diamond wedding ring, and a marriage ceremony in Bali. Events determined, however, otherwise.

Taking real risks for nominal rewards highlights the absence of free will

Climbers mistakenly claim that only climbers can understand why climbers climb. In fact, it usually takes an indifferent observer to gain some objective insights into human behavior. The climber imagines one thing, the observer notes another. The climber imagines they are exercising their free will, by participating in an activity despite the inherent risks. However their behavior demonstrates the opposite, the complete absence of free will. Who, given a free will, would take such massive risks in return for no more than the right to say, 'I climbed Everest'? They in fact feel a compulsion. Their act is clearly determined by this compulsion to do something few others have done, to stand out, to be special.

The mountain has conquered them. Often it is a deep sense of insecurity that compels us to take risks. We want to earn other's approval and acceptance. We desire status. We desire proof of 'gods' love, so that we can be confident of a place in heaven. We need to distinguish ourselves among our peers. We need to feel special, to compensate for feeling inadequate. We need constant reassurance. The everest climber proves that the mountain owns them, the mountain has control over them, the mountain laughs at them, the mountain masters them. They spend hundreds of thousands of dollars, risking life and limb, simply to say they reached its peak.

A masterful person would laugh at the idea. They would let their own insecurities and ego go and simply walk on by. Only those who fall under the mountain's 'thrall' cannot resist the compulsion to take such serious risks, for such nominal rewards. The Olympics consume massive financial resources, time, effort, and investment, merely to find out who can run or swim the fastest, jump the furthest and highest, and so on. These 'achievements' are essentially meaningless. And humans still imagine they have free will.

Even our dreams are determined

If we had any free will at all, then the least we would be able to control would be our dreams. We would be able to lucid dream at will. If our bodies existed for our pleasure, for our sakes, then the least we would be able to do is to enjoy lucid dreaming.

I have researched Lucid dreaming, and written a book about it. It is available from the same place you found this book.

We are all flotsam and jetsam on a sea of emotion

We are flotsam and jetsam on a sea of emotions. We rise and fall with its swell, pushed and towed, buoyed and sucked down. As Captains of our ships we imagine we are 'at the helm' and 'in control'. We deny the power of the sea. Sometimes we are amber, sometimes sea-weed, sometimes riding a powerful wave, buoyed up and rushing forward, then other times, simply 'washed-up'. We rise and fall with the waves of our emotions. We are directed hither and thither by our emotions. They are the winds that fill our sails. Our hopes and desires determine the course we will take.

We may wear the Captain's hat, however we are not master of our vessel. We merely get that impression whenever the weather allows us to reach our destinations. Only when storms emerge and frustrate us in our progress do we feel any absence of 'free' will. Only then do we feel at the mercy of things we have no control over. Only then does the illusion of 'free-will' become transparent.

The enlightening value of thwarted desire

We only recognize ourselves as slaves to the master of desire when we are thwarted in our desires, and cannot satisfy them. They then become undesirable, unwelcome, painful, sources of frustration and dissatisfaction. We have the illusion of free-will so long as we can satisfy our desires, or easily anticipate their satisfaction in the near future. They are then a welcome source of pleasure. Then we feel a unity with them. They appear to serve our interests. It is only when we cannot satisfy them that they become a burden we want to throw off. This is when the apparent unity dissolves. Then our desires become our antagonists. We find ourselves in conflict with them. It is only then that we recognize the reality that we are in fact slave to our desires. They control us. This then brings us to wonder why we have them at all. If our desires do not serve our interests, then whose interests do they serve?

Desire is not necessarily evil

Desire is neither good nor bad within itself. The question is merely whether that desire can be satisfied without inflicting costs and suffering on others. Desire produces frustration and irritation, even depression, when it cannot be fulfilled. In that case it takes on a negative value. Of course most people only care about the costs the satisfaction of a desire has for them and theirs.

They may be able to shift the costs onto others, to make them pay for their own satisfaction. In this case desire is 'evil'. However if a desire can be easily and readily satisfied, at no cost to anyone, then it takes on a good value, it becomes an opportunity for adding value to the universe in terms of positive experiences. However in reality the costs are usually high, and shifted onto the least powerful members of any society, those with the worst holistic inheritances, slaves, workers, and most of all, animals.

These actors do not participate in the satisfactions, they merely bear the costs. They suffer so that others might satisfy their desires. They endure pain so that others can enjoy pleasure. These actors are not given informed consent. They are misled with 'noble lies'. They are compelled to endure 'fates worse than death'. When we decide which desires should be satisfied, and how, we must adopt a holistic approach, considering the interests of every actor that stands to benefit or pay. We must include every participant in our cost-benefit analyses.

Today we use a very narrow band of 'referents'. We exclude foreigners, members of other ethnic groups or nationalities, and most of all, members of other species. Given such holistic calculations, we would define many desires which we today satisfy, as unacceptable. This would mean many goods and services would cease to exist. However we would also find that many of the simple pleasures can be had at a very low cost, once we reform our systems of relations and definitions. We could become more like the Benobals, and less like the Chimpanzees.

All behavior is determined by desire

People wish to define will as different to desire. Thus we have the meaningless notion of overcoming desire through will-power. All our actions are determined by our emotions, our desires. Just because we deny ourselves the satisfaction of a particular desire, does not mean we have demonstrated the dominance of reason over emotion. We have not demonstrated the freedom of our will. All that 'will-power' demonstrates is that a competing desire to avoid the consequences of acting on a particular desire is stronger than the desire to satisfy that particular desire.

All we have is competing desires. All our final actions are derivative of some desire. It is not a question of the 'mind', the 'spirit', the 'will' overcoming the desires of the body. The will consists of nothing but emotional desires. Reason is merely the reckoning of anticipated consequences of satisfying any particular desire. These consequences are feared as they entail pain or the experience of things we do not desire, which we are averse to. Alternatively they can simply bear opportunity costs, preventing us from satisfying other desires.

Every action is motivated by the emotional desire to satisfy some desire. Reason has been called 'the quieter desire'. It is conventionally mistaken for an action of free will, of 'will-power'. However it is equally the product of an emotional desire as any of the more 'noisy' passions. We do not act on some desires simply as we are averse to the anticipated consequences.

This aversion or fear is an emotion. Reasoning is a process of reckoning of costs and benefits of acting on any particular desire. We simply sometimes calculate that it is more desirable not to act on any particular desire. Note, it is not desirable. All human actions are intended to satisfy some emotional desire. This is the motive for all our action. This is what animates us. Without emotional desires we are inanimate. This is known as a 'persistent vegetative state'.

There is no qualitative difference between seeking to satisfy the desire for longer-term contentment, rather than taking the risks and accepting the longer-term costs associated with immediately indulging in the satisfaction of each desire as it emerges and becomes felt. Plato has no more will-power than those he would claim to be 'morally' superior to. He merely fears acting on some impulses. He focuses on the costs and benefits.

Those who give themselves up to orgasmic satisfaction of their desires focus on the benefits. Those with the greatest 'will-power' are those who manage to enjoy the occasional orgy, while being more 'reasonable' in daily life. In this way they optimize the human condition. Only those who, as the Dao puts it, 'know when to stop' demonstrate true superiority. Plato is too risk averse, and stops too soon. The hedonists leave it too late, until they are forced to bear all the costs associated with addiction to pleasure.

Thus ideally we would attend orgies and drugs during a limited number of 'holidays' from an otherwise 'sober', reasonable lifestyle. In this way we could have the best of both worlds. Unfortunately the Plato's of this world believe they have a right to force everyone to deny themselves the things they deny themselves. Their motives are more likely to be unconscious jealousy and envy, than any altruistic concern for the well-being of others. They imagine they are superior, however they are in fact weaker than the moderate, balanced person.

The Pope, having denied himself sexual pleasures due to fear, presents himself as having greater 'will-power'. In fact his will is so weak he must deny himself any satisfaction. His motivation is the emotion of fear. No particular emotion is any more or less superior to any other.

Emotion is emotion. Desire is desire. In fact the Pope demonstrates, in the conventional sense of 'free will', less freedom of will than the recreational drug user and orgy attender. Of course in reality his will is no less determined than the hedonist's will is. No-one has free will. All behavior is derivative of, and therefore determined by, some emotional desire.

Motivation, success, failure, and payoffs

Life offers inexhaustible challenges to satisfy our insatiable need for purpose, for purposeful action. Purposes motivate action. They animate us. All animals are purpose driven and object oriented. We are all motivated by a desire for the experience of pleasures and the avoidance of pain. Eros is dominant when we feel confident of satisfying our desires, of attaining our ends-goals-objects-objectives via the available means or anticipated opportunities. False hope motivates most, though failure increasingly diminishes our hope, as we become more and more realistic, or retreat from reality into fantasy.

Thanatos is hopelessness, a lack of opportunities to satisfy our desires, or to realize our hopes-dreams-goals. However it is ironically success that is more likely to counter our 'affirmation reflex'. Only the successful, those who have experience of satisfying their desires, who find that no lasting satisfaction is possible. Those who have no success can continue in the false hope that once they do have success, they will be happy.

Only the successful are in a position to learn from experience that it is impossible to remain content. Thus while the unsuccessful are able to 'keep the faith', the successful are more likely to lose faith in their power to achieve lasting satisfaction-calm-security-happiness. This loss of hope and the absence of faith-belief in their own efficacy, the realization that action can not attain the desired ends, or these ends are attainable, however they can not provide the hoped-for satisfactions-results-outcomes, can eliminate all motivation for action. This is the definition of Thanatos. Inanimate objects have no motivation. They have no motive power to animate them.

An objective is ultimately merely the means to the ends of satisfaction, of pleasure. As long as it is not attained, it can maintain its motivational power. However if people lose faith in their ability to attain the means to obtain their objectives, it makes no difference how attractive the objective is. However what is more likely to destroy all motivation is the attainment of all the objectives available, and the discovery that they do not bring the lasting pleasure or satisfaction anticipated. This is why successful people are more likely to commit suicide than unsuccessful people.

Pleasure drugs do deliver immediately, therefore they produce a massive motivation to repeat the action that brings this pleasure. This is why some drugs are so addictive. The same applies to sex, for those whose experiences of sex are extremely satisfying. Runners find the natural opiates that are released after long distance running equally addictive. Any payoff can make an action satisfying. This is the basis of all 'games' and 'sports'. 'Our will be done'. Whenever we set a goal and reach it the satisfaction we feel as a result motivates us to repeat the action, to feel this satisfaction. High scores in electronic games are absolutely meaningless, however they are satisfying based on the same principle.

Dio Culpa

In the deterministic universe we live in, the only being that could be justly accused of 'sin' is the creator, the intelligent designer, if you will, God. It is this being that should ask us for forgiveness. Dio culpa. Perhaps this is the true meaning of a god sacrificing himself to himself, like Odin, by sacrificing himself in the form of his own son. In this context it makes sense.

More genetic injustice

Metabolism, the rate at which excess calories are burnt up, is genetically determined. We inherit our metabolism to a large degree. Glycerol, given off by expanded fat cells, circulates in blood, reducing hunger. However the efficacy of this process is also genetically determined. Cholecystokinin, together with other unidentified chemicals released during digestion, signals satiation and suppresses hunger. Once more this process is more efficacious in some than others. As such these genetic factors form part of our holistic inheritance. The only chance we have to manage these factors is before conception takes place. Afterwards all we can do is 'put out fires', and conduct 'damage control'. Those with unfortunate holistic inheritances are punished their entire lives for the bad hands we allowed them to be dealt, due to our unwillingness to behave responsibly.

You can help a flower bloom, but a weed will never become a rose

John Watson (1878-1958) argued that you could reduce anyone to criminality if you could control their circumstances. I have argued the same thing since I was a child. Of course most people with positive holistic inheritances have an emotional resistance to the idea, which basically reduces to denial. They would like to think that they are by nature 'morally' superior to criminals. However Watson went further to suggest that we are all 'blank slates', that not only could you reduce most people to criminals, that you could also turn anyone into a talented surgeon, writer, painter, musician, or architect.

Watson may have had good intentions and honest motivations, but he was overly optimistic. Most people still deny I could reduce them to criminality, however everyone wants to imagine that they all have the same potential. This is an emotionally satisfying illusion. The truth is we inherit a genetic potential which can be realized. Our environment can prevent us from reaching this potential, however it can only bring out what is already within us. And we do not have the same potential.

We are born unequal. The only way to bring about equality is to manage reproduction, so that only equals reproduce. By providing every child with an equal holistic inheritance, we can ensure that each has the same potential. Then the outcomes will be dependent upon the child's effort, sacrifice, and risk-taking.

Holistic justice and the myths of free-will and meritocracy

'Free will' is a hegemonic concept which defines inequality as meritocratic, based on personal merit and effort, and hence as earned, as deserved. Biblical free will defines human suffering as a result of the acts of free will of Adam and Eve in eating of the forbidden fruit. In ancient Greek theology, it was another woman, Pandora, who is responsible for all our woe. Ham and all his dark-skinned progeny were punished by 'god' for an act of willful disobedience by being condemned to slavery. The Jewish 'Yesheva' tradition is that god gave man free will, and man chose to do evil. Read more in 'Religion'.

No definition can be considered in isolation. All definitions are reflexive of each other. The meaning of anything is its reflexive relationship to everything else. Heaven, meritocracy, karma, blaming the victim, conditioning the victim to blame themselves, sin, and 'free-will', are all elements of a greater whole. They are holograms of the whole they constitute. You cannot 'meaningfully' consider the 'significance' or 'power' of any individual definition without placing it within the holistic context which produces its 'meaning'. Each part contains the whole, and the whole is the totality of the interactions between all the parts. This the holistic, the *hologramic*, meaning of meaning.

To define success in life as being earned, a definition reflexive of, and dependent on, the hegemonic definition of free will, legitimates the power of the lucky. This defines the lucky as 'morally' superior. They worked harder and made greater sacrifices. The lucky wash their hands of any real responsibility to systematically help the unlucky. They are not unlucky. They deserve their misfortune. They should have gotten up earlier, worked harder, and earned god's grace. They were 'free' to 'decide'.

The religious right in Australia, the Pentecostal movement as represented by Hillsong, maintain a Calvinistic protestant world view in which god rewards the righteous with material benefits and rewards. The Hillsong church appeals to the materialistically aspirational voter with interpretations in which so called Christians can demonstrate their salvation through god's grace, as indicated through materialistic success. Thus the priests have constructed needles with eyes so large you can ride a camel through.

It is true that hard work is usually important to success. However without luck, hard work cannot produce success. The factors involved in success are effort, sacrifice, risk taking, and luck. Anything times zero is zero. So if your holistic inheritance works against you, you have no chance of succeeding. This is the situation most people are conceived into in this world. Your efforts and sacrifices will be 'leveraged' according to how lucky you are. If you are conceived with intelligence, talent, looks, a loving family, a secure environment, access to educational resources, support networks and mentors, as a member of the dominant hegemonic socio-economic-cultural group, then you are lucky. For every unit of effort and sacrifice you'll get multiple 'luck-leveraged' units back. This is highly motivating. You have every chance of living 'the American dream'.

Although myths claiming anyone can work their way to wealth and success can be motivational, they blame and victimize those with poor holistic inheritances for their bad luck. Socialized into definitions of free will, meritocracy, and Karma, those with unlucky holistic inheritances blame and loathe themselves for being failures. They push their own children harder, believing that if they push them hard enough, if they work hard enough, they might have better lives than themselves. However in reality outcomes are a product of work, sacrifice, and risk, multiplied by the luck of your holistic inheritance.

A person is limited to realizing the particular holistic potential of their holistic inheritance. Personality traits like perseverance, optimism, and initiative are also directly or indirectly inherited. The conditions which produce 'motivation' can be clearly expressed in terms of 'expectations theory'. Your holistic inheritance determines your opportunities and experiences and therefore whether you can reasonably expect that hard work and sacrifice will get you what you desire. If you have faith in your ability to earn what you desire, you will be highly motivated. If you see no way to get what you want, you will have little motivation to work hard.

Being conceived with a negative inheritance is like moving the balance point of a lever toward the worker, away from the load. Rather than having your efforts leveraged, you have to work even harder, making even greater sacrifices, simply to survive. This is demotivating. In extreme cases the person will choose to die rather than live a life that is merely effort and sacrifice without reward. They have lost faith, with every good reason, in their capacity to earn a life worth living. If life is work and suffering without reward, then what motivation could you have to endure it? Enter the beneficiary classes' invention, the 'noble' lies of heaven and hell. See 'Religion' for details.

Christians in the U.S have as much contempt for their poor, as the Hindu's do for their 'untouchables'. Christians, Muslims, and Buddhists alike legitimate their exploitation of inherited inequality with reference to religious dogma. Karma and bad luck are considered 'earned'. According to their self-serving, masturbatory teleological 'logic', 'God' rewards those he loves, and punishes the poor, who, reflexively and teleologically, must be un-righteous, otherwise god wouldn't be punishing them. The untouchables would not have been conceived into that caste if they had not accumulated bad karma in previous lives. Alternatively they may be considered as having 'moved up' the food-chain from some previous life as an animal. In either case they will be perceived as deserving to be treated as little better than animals. Only Mohamed, in the Koran, recognizes the reality of determinism. See 'Religion' for details.

Of course those that are lucky define their luck as earned. It massages their egos. It also serves to mystify and motivate the unlucky to keep working and sacrificing. If they just work hard enough, and sacrifice enough, they will one-day get what they want. The good life is within the reach of all. And if they themselves don't reach the Promised Land, then they can be assured that their children will. Slaves and wage-slaves are better motivated by such 'noble' lies, than by whips. The slave 'buys-into' the hegemonic system of relations. They 'consume' the propaganda spewed out by the hegemonic public relations systems. The slaves want to believe it, so they are willingly seduced. Their egos tell them they belong with the lucky. Their ship will sail in any moment now. Just work harder, make greater sacrifices, and they'll get their just rewards. If not here on earth, then at least in the afterlife or next life. At the very least at least their children, or their children, will get to the 'Promised Land'.

It is misleading to say that some people produce their own luck. They inherited the skills necessary to produce their own luck. They inherited the situations that presented themselves to be opportunistically exploited. They are bequeathed or burdened with a particular holistic inheritance. You inherit your nationality, or even you inherit the chance to emigrate. You are conceived into circumstances and conditions and situations and institutionalized sets of relationships and the definitions they are iteratively reflexive of. Hard work and sacrifice alone have never lead to success. In this world at this very moment the people who are working the hardest and making the greatest sacrifices receive the least rewards, while others are massively rewarded simply for being conceived to a grand holistic inheritance.

In a fair and just society, hard work and sacrifice would be rewarded, rather than luck. The lucky would use their luck for the benefit of everyone. The lucky would do their best to ensure that the next generation would inherit the characteristics that would define them as lucky. The general population would, over generations, be defined by more and more good luck.

Those with greater potential for innovation and value production would have access to greater resources, however they would employ these resources to produce real value for everyone. Some inequality appears unavoidable, as an incentive for hard work, sacrifice, and innovation, to ensure that people are motivated to fully employ their talents, but under social democracy, most inequality that existed would have been earned, and not simply inherited. We would systematically seek to minimize inherited inequality, not by 'regressing to the mean', but by 'lifting the average' over each successive generation.

The marriage of Capitalism with Social Democracy

The only way to produce true meritocracy is to reward only effort, sacrifice, and risk.

The prerequisite for such a rewards system would be holistic justice, the inheritance of a more or less equal holistic inheritance by all participants. Such a society would not allow 'windfall' profits to be excessive. Windfall profits are benefits that you receive through no effort of your own. For example you buy an old painting and you discover a Monet or Picasso under the canvas. Such a society would not allow excessive profits to be gained from speculation or gambling. The focus would be on reward for effort, sacrifice, and risk. This would have a great motivational impact. You would get what you earned, and hence if you wanted more, you would work harder. People would then have a real incentive to produce as much value as they could.

Sacrifice refers to 'opportunity costs'. When you devote your effort to one thing, you sacrifice all the alternatives you now cannot devote your efforts to. While you are studying medicine you cannot be writing pop-songs. Speculation is merely gambling, and this produces no real value. Risk, on the other hand, is investment effort in things that may, or may not, ultimately produce real value, and hence reward the investor for their investment.

Risk is the investment of effort and sacrifice without any immediate reward. It is risky as there is no guarantee you will ever be rewarded for that effort. This is the risk of the entrepreneur, the writer, the musician, the painter, and the student. The 'creative' person is intrinsically motivated by a passion for what they do, and often even 'goodwill'. They derive intrinsic satisfaction from the process and the product of this process. However many processes and outcomes are not intrinsically rewarding. In these cases we need to provide extrinsic motivators, such as approval, praise, status, and financial rewards.

Many innovations fail to ever reward those who worked on them. We cannot predict in advance which innovations will prove valuable. Most innovators are derided by their contemporaries as dreamers. Most inventors were ridiculed. Everyone said 'it couldn't be done'. So we rarely 'invest' in innovators. They are left to invest in themselves.

Often their innovations require them to find other investors as well, to finance the process of innovation. They need resources for research and development. They need investors to pay for their living costs while they devote their effort to their innovations. They need access to equipment. They need to pay others to work with them. These investors, like the innovator themselves, are motivated by a combination of passion for the innovation, goodwill, and a desire for future rewards.

Some people value the immediate consumption of their income more than the possibility of greater consumption in the future. They are not willing to take risks. Others prefer to sacrifice immediate consumption for the possibility of even greater consumption in the future. The investors risk losing their investment. Thus they deserve to be rewarded for taking these risks. Many will lose their investments. Holistically this will be compensated for by the few investments which yield good returns.

Thus we must accept that the price of innovation and creativity is some degree of inequality. However so long as this inequality is earned by effort, sacrifice, and risk, it is legitimate. We may still feel jealous and envious of the successful, however if we all had the same opportunities, and more or less equal holistic inheritances, this inequality of outcomes would be fair. In any case windfalls would be taxed heavily and redistributed. There would be no obscene inequality, no poverty, and no excessive wealth and privilege.

I am appealing for Social Democracy based on reproductive responsibility aimed at the generation of relatively equal holistic inheritances, married to the unequal reward of unequal effort, sacrifice, and risk intrinsic to transparent, regulated capitalist markets. This would be a wedding of capitalism and Social Democracy, based on vows of holistic justice.

Inequality represents an opportunity for exploitation. It is naive to think that you can maintain opportunities for exploitation that no-one will take advantage of. The 'communist' Party provided as many opportunities for privilege as the capitalist system does. Pretending you can change human nature won't achieve

anything. Anyone trying to convince you otherwise is either naive, or disingenuously trying to mystify you for their own purposes. Reality is reality. Fantasy is satisfying, but it will never produce an optimal life experience for everyone. Every time you deny reality, you end up paying for it, sooner or later. Lies have long legs. See 'Convergences' for more details.

The legal justice system in the context of determinism

It is complete rubbish that the state considers us all innocent till proven guilty. The State pays the State prosecutor to do all in its power to get a conviction. The person telling the jury you are guilty, and trying to convince them of this, is employed by the State. This public prosecutor also threatens you with a longer sentence if you will not acquiesce and pretend you are guilty.

You are coerced into collaborating with them. They understand that determinism means it is a form of violence to 'punish' people, so it makes no difference to them whether you are guilty or innocent of the crime you are being charged with. They simply need to charge some people as a deterrent to others. Punishing a guilty person is, holistically speaking, no more or less unjust as punishing a person who is innocent of that particular crime.

Individuals are merely sacrificed in the supposed interests of 'society'. People need to be 'punished' to serve as deterrents to others, and to give the appearance of 'justice' being served by 'the system'. Many people who are innocent of crimes spend longer in jail than those who are guilty, but who 'plea bargained', 'admitting' their guilt in return for shorter sentences.

Deterrents of limited value

Humans are not rational. Humans tend to become overcome by momentary impulses. So most deterrents are ineffective when it comes to crimes of passion or desperation. Only people who would otherwise not commit crimes for other reasons, take such deterrents into consideration at all.

Biological determinism in psychopathology

Psychopaths appear to have no fear of consequences, and thus no inhibitions. The brains of men have a smaller orbital frontal region than in women. Anyone who did not know any better would assume they came from 2 different species. Women are more capable of controlling their aggressive impulses, of inhibiting their urges and moderating their behavior. This all indicates a biological predisposition towards violence in men. In fact 90% of murderers are male.

Violent sexual offenders, in contrast to the typical rapist, are aroused more by violence than by sex. They require violence to become sexually aroused. Murderers are 'wired' differently from most of us. They have a different prefrontal cortex. This is the area that inhibits actions. While the killer and the non-killer both feel the same impulse, one is able to inhibit it, while the other acts on it.

NeuroScience shows that our ability to inhibit our impulses is largely a question of our genetic inheritance, and the level of chronic frustration and conflict we experience during our daily lives. Thus deterrents are not efficacious, and punishing criminals is itself unjust.

Deterrents as ineffectual, and punishment as unjust

Our legal systems want to have it both ways. It denies the absence of free will, the reality of determinism, in general, while allowing for 'diminished responsibility' in some cases. In reality all our acts are determined, and so there is no 'justice' in the criminal justice system as such. The system merely punishes to satisfy our human need to harm others, disguised as a desire to avenge harms done to us. In theory it seeks to provide deterministic disincentives and deterrents, in an attempt to counter the desire to satisfy other instincts which result in crimes being committed.

However in reality those who commit crimes either do so without rational considerations ever entering into their actions, or find themselves in situations where the crimes are rational, given their circumstances. In either case, the legal punishments they risk suffering have no power as deterrents. Crimes are either committed when emotions run so high that people can't 'think straight', or 'thinking straight' identifies crimes as the only solution to the current problems. Unemployment, underemployment, chronic poverty and the absence of alternative opportunities, makes crime a rational alternative to poverty for many people.

The risk of prison is merely accepted as the price of the opportunity to escape chronic poverty and exploitation. Rich people who commit white-collar crimes out of pure greed, tend to find themselves in 'rehabilitation' centers where they enjoy luxuries and opportunities that most people could only dream of. They are not punished. The fact that recidivism is highest among sex-crimes and those whose lives are defined by chronic poverty and the absence of any reasonable alternative ways to have a life worth living, highlights the reality of the situation.

Deterrents do not work against strong instinctive desires, or against those who are driven by other forms of desperation to commit crimes, no matter what the consequences might be. Punishing criminals, in the context of the absence of free will, and the 'logic' of crime, merely represents victimization of the criminals who are in fact already victims of a poor holistic inheritance. In U.S kidnapping for ransom carries the death penalty. This is because the most likely victims are rich people. Compare this to laws against rape or aggravated assault, crimes which the poor are more likely to be victims of.

Involuntary euthanasia more humane than life-time incarceration?

If we find we cannot let people loose in society because of their behavior, and the only alternative is prison, then perhaps it would be more humane to institute a humane form of involuntary euthanasia for these people. This is more human and merciful than a life in and out of prison, necessary in an attempt to protect the public from these people. They would not be informed. They would have no reason to fear death. Simply one day they would eat, drink, or breathe something, completely unaware, and drift off to the next world. If we believed in eternal life, then we should have no hesitation in implementing this. I would rather die in this way, than spend 30 years in prison before new technology made it possible for me to prove my innocence.

Determinism in the context of justice

The recognition of determinism makes some things harder, and some easier.

Acknowledging determinism makes hating people for what they have done to you a little more complicated, as they didn't chose the set of conditions and events that brought them to behave that way. It makes such experiences a little more complicated emotionally, but at a higher level, much simpler. However it is hard to let go of ill feeling towards people who systematically injured me, and worse, never found the conscience to express any regret for the suffering they inflicted on me.

I have given people every chance to express some regret, or make some slight gesture that might at least validate my experience, and in some way ease my pain, and ameliorate the consequences of their victimization of me. However they have not responded in the slightest. Humans need to have their victimization and suffering validated by others. They need to feel that their society is actually seeking natural justice for them via some transparent process.

Many judges today accept that people's behavior is determined, and therefore sentencing them with the intention of punishing them is unjust. Further, it is not efficacious in deterring and hence preventing or reducing crime and injustice. The most serious, serial offenders suffer from an inherited poor impulse control. The most common offenders come from socio-economic circumstances defined by chronic poverty, stress, and violence. The threat of possible incarceration is vague in comparison with their immediate situation, and the offer of criminal opportunities to escape it.

Human nature demands validation and some form of 'natural justice'. It may not demand 'an eye for an eye', as it can 'see' how, as Gandhi noted, this would 'leave everyone blind'. It may not demand retribution, or 'an ounce of flesh', but the demands of our human nature must be addressed at some level with some form of validation of our experience, a redress of our damaged sense of 'security', the redress of our grievances, some form of compensation or recognition and sympathy, a reassurance that our society will seek to prevent such things happening again, and some form of natural justice. This is what more enlightened judges seek to achieve through their courts, their legal processes, and their verdicts.

Back again to my earlier thoughts. My model became that of Interactive determinism. It reconciles the apparent contradiction of being both the agent and agency of a deterministic evolution. We are a part of the whole, and not divisible or separate-able from it. We are, as inter-actors and propergents, both the agents and the propergents of evolution. We participate actively in the process that we are ourselves the product of. We have evolved to a level at which we are active in the process of evolution at the genetic level. Our tastes and preferences have become one of the selection pressures. We, as the products of evolution, can actually seek to adapt evolution to our own tastes and preferences. Of course we have inherited these tastes and preferences, so we are not talking of free will. We have been adapted as a species by evolution, and are now in a position to actively adapt ourselves to our world, and our world to ourselves.

We have accumulated random mutations which have been negatively selected or filtered by selection pressures. These pressures have produced the direction towards greater complexity and sophistication that now allows us to manipulate our internal, genetic environment, and our external environments. (If) Holistic, enlightened reason will (can) demonstrate that it is better adapted to our environments (then it will become the dominant determinant). I just added the bits in brackets. Originally I was convinced that holistically enlightened reason must be more adapted to our world, but now I am not that confident. (I hope) Enlightened holistic reason will propel us in the direction of the transformation of our human society, towards its holistic enlightenment.

Holistic reasoning is more complex and sophisticated than reason(s)ing. (I hope) This reflects the direction of our species. Of course few of us exhibit these mutations. In the same way that occasional technical genius has propelled our species forward technologically, our species will (I can only hope) be propelled into a transformation by the occasional holistically enlightened 'sages' among us.

All forms of genius are uncommon. We need not (I hope) feel disparaged by the general lack of enlightened holistic intelligence or holistically enlightened self-interest. Leaders will (I hope) emerge from amongst us in all fields, including that of enlightened leadership. The masses will, as usual, be defined historically by the occasional genius amongst them. The majority will always be wrong. It is the minority that propel our species forward. Many are called, but few are chosen. Evolution is directed by the filter of basic adaption to the environment, and competition, or relative adaptive superiority.

In the presence of competition, the more sophisticated and complex have a competitive advantage. Of course inferior models tend to survive alongside the superior models for some time. Evolution acts over billions of years. It does, however, appear to follow an exponential curve. At these later stages in our evolutionary process, the speed of evolution appears to be increasing.

It took us billions of years to invent the wheel. Once we had invented the wheel, it took a few thousands of years to invent the steam engine. It then took a few hundred years to develop combustion engines. From there it has taken merely decades to develop electric engines that are re-charged when we brake. Our social progress has followed a similarly exponential path. (Who am I kidding? What was I thinking? Wishful thinking? Exponential? Surely merely fits and starts? Hardly even linear! I guess it's only when you increase the scale of time you use that the fits and starts appear as the 'artifact' of a line at all.)

Determinism as our ego's arch enemy

We should consider that we pay to experience the creativity of authors and directors. Their films, stories, and games are engaging and interesting, often more engaging and interesting than those that we could imagine ourselves. It is only our egos which demand to define our will as free, and our natures as self-determined. Only our ego demands to be author and director. It would rather be king of a desert than citizen of a lush, diverse, complex world of wonders, opportunities, and adventures.

It is, of course, the nature of our human ego to try to dominate, to separate, to control, to individuate, to be cause, to define ourselves as the masters of our own destinies. However our apparently self-determined strivings are merely the expression of the algorithmic drives, instincts, and innate definitions that we have inherited.

Our egos are products. We no more chose our natures, than the earth choses to orbit the sun. Our will is determined, inherited. Our subjective experience of free will is merely the opportunity to act on our genetic-socio-culturally inherited impulses. We have mutually contradictory or Pareto efficient desires, all of which we have inherited in one way or another.

When we 'rationalize' that we have made a decision, of our own 'free' wills, all that has happened is that one mutually incompatible desire has proved stronger than the other, and so it has won out. We are aware of the potential risks and costs associated with acting on our impulses, and so when we claim to have decided not to act on some impulse, it is really the 'costs' that have decided for us. They have 'outweighed' the benefits.

So, no free will to found anywhere I've looked. I have found that many of the world's greatest philosophers came to the same conclusions as me, for the same reasons. I thought many of my ideas were just too strange for anyone but me to take seriously, but I have found since that many of my most 'unconventional' ideas are actually part of the conventional theory of millennia old philosophies and eastern religions, and even modern physics, both conventional and contested. Read more in 'Convergences'.

In hindsight, I can identify another significant experience that must have contributed to my final inescapable recognition of the nature of determinism. I had had no contact with my father since I was 4 years old. When I met him as an adult, I was shocked to find that I was more or less a combination-replicant-clone of this man and my mother. The similarities in behavior, mannerisms, and appearance felt almost de-humanizing.

Accountability and Response-ability

Interactive-determinism makes 'moral' judgments of a persons' actions problematic. It does not, however, reduce the validity of holding people legally accountable. It is desirable to remove persons from society who demonstrate they are a risk to others. It is desirable to attempt to influence decision-making by providing incentives for desirable behaviors, and disincentives for undesirable behaviors. Incentives and disincentives, external motivators and controls, have the potential to promote positive behaviors.

Persons with a low culturally (a culture of egotism, short-term unenlightened self-interest and opportunistic exploitation of inherited inequality) and genetically (low impulse control, low level of empathy and so on) inherited propensity to consider the interests of others, can be lead to do so through incentives and disincentives. We can use self-interest to promote the general welfare. Read more in 'Convergences'.

It is absolutely necessary, however, that we place limits on personal consumption and privilege. There must be limits. Schopenhauer argued that we are all doomed to misery, as our desires are unlimited and insatiable. We can never satisfy our desires. They are 'leaking buckets'. As soon as we have that car or house or status, we set our sights on a faster car, a bigger house, and even greater status. For this reason we need some paternalistic limits. We are happiest when we feel that we have achieved our limit. It is the sense of achievement which is most rewarding. It is the sense of value, approval, acceptance, and security that satisfies us.

Where there are no imposed limits, we are doomed to the misery of insatiability. Insecurity will never be assuaged with status, or power, or consumption. All arms races breed insecurity. When we narcissistically prove ourselves worthy of acceptance and approval, we threaten others' sense of self-worth. They will feel threatened by us. They will seek to 'cut us down to size' to prevent relative comparisons being made between us and them.

When we succeed we often make others feel less worthy of acceptance and approval in comparison with us. Insecurity is often reflexive of security. The more worthy you appear to be, the less worthy I will tend to feel. The more competent you are, the more inadequate I feel. The more attractive you are, the less attractive I feel. The smarter you are, the dumber I feel. The more talented you are, the less talented I feel. The more status you have, the more inferior I feel. Read 'Convergences' for more details.

The nature of interactive determinism is revealed in analyses of meaning and experience

Meaning is determined. Every particular organism has genetic protocols, or algorithms, which determine, and limit, what it can experience, and how it will experience it. The same interaction or event will be experienced differently and therefore defined differently by different organisms. Organisms with similar algorithms will share similar ways of experiencing and defining things. Meaning is not intrinsic to a thing. It is an artifact or product of an interaction between an experience-er and an experience/d. Genetic protocols form the primary basis of meaning, the foundations on which 'subjective' and 'social realities' can be constructed.

Given that definitions are genetically and culturally inherited, they are, for the most part, interactively deterministic of how we, as members of particular species and social groups, experience life. I say for the most part, as we have the capacity to challenge the inherited definitions, and construct new ones. However our potential for doing so is interactively determined by our socio-economic-cultural-historic-genetic inheritances.

Genetic and cultural definitions

A cow can eat and digest grass, and so defines grass as 'food'. It experiences having grass to eat as positive. A human cannot digest grass, and would not experience being given grass to eat as positive. The human could not 'choose' its innate definition of grass.

It cannot chose to define the event of being given grass to eat as a positive experience. However, from among the population of things that a human could potentially define as food, due to its ability to eat and digest them, humans inherit cultural definitions of 'food'. This relates significantly to meat eating versus vegan cultures, and just as equally to cultures of junk food and health food. Haggis is a good example of how what is defined in one culture as offal, is considered a delicacy in another. Similar comments could be made about tobacco and alcohol. Both are toxic substances, but have been defined as 'Genuss Mitteln', satisfying consumer goods, even lifestyles, in our popular culture.

What free will *would* be

The formulations of free will as defined by the hegemonic culture and reflected, iteratively and reflexively, in the popular language culture, are problematic, rather than compelling. However we can define what free will would mean. It would mean, among other things, the ability to arbitrarily decide on how to respond to any stimulus. This would mean being able to experience authentic and genuine joy in response to stimuli that are currently associated with physical or emotional agony. We would be a-priori, indifferent to any and all stimuli and experiences. We would have no preferences. We would have no prejudices. We would be the equivalent of a Buddha, a Daoist Sage. We would have attained the god-head of the Bhagavad' Gita.

Implicit in the formulations of free will in the dominant, hegemonic, popular language culture, is the assumption that we, as humans, are the agents of our action, that we chose to act in particular ways. However, in reality, our choices are protocolled responses to stimuli. We do not initiate actions as such. The nature of our experience is a function of our inherited genetic protocols combined with cultural conditioning. We inherit what we can experience, what we will experience, and how we will experience it, how we will define it. How we experience or define something, or an event, determines how we will respond to it. Thus we have no free will.

What freedom means in a human sense is merely the freedom to be able to pursue genetically and culturally inherited desires. We only define or experience external limits to our pursuit of our inherited desires as restrictions of our freedom. We can only have freedom from and freedom to. Your wants and desires are determined by your genetic and cultural inheritance. You don't get to choose what you want. We are not free to choose what it is we want to be free to do, our desires, or to be free from, our aversions.

We are not free to determine our own desires, ambitions, drives, fears, compulsions, revulsions, loves, hates, talents, or personalities. We are not free to choose our holistic inheritances. We only have the potential to choose what sort of inheritance, burden or gift, that we bequeath or victimize our offspring with. We only have the response-ability to decide what we will re- produce.

The most extreme case of an obvious limit to our sense of freedom is that of slavery, where we exist merely as means to others ends. Slaves exist to facilitate the satisfaction of the desires of others. Slaves produce value merely so that others may consume it. Slaves have little opportunity to pursue their own desires, dreams, ambitions, or urges. Of course the slave owners will happily allow them to pursue their sexual urges, to multiply, and increase the slave owners' wealth.

The heaven of sulphuric vents

If we were put at the bottom of the ocean in the sulphuric environment of a volcanic vent, we could not chose to genuinely enjoy being there. However there are animals which are constituted in such a way that the experience of the volcanic vents is pleasant. Place them in the pool-side chair of a luxury hotel, however, and they would be begging for us to kill them, and put them out of their misery.

Here I must give credit to the late Polish science fiction writer Stanislaw Lem, the author of 'The star chronicles', for opening my mind up to this concept. In his story missionaries are sent to a far planet to convert its inhabitants to their religion. The locals are dumbfounded. They are told that if they don't believe, they will spend eternity in some fantastically appealing place called hell. If they do believe, they will be forced to spend an eternity in some appallingly horrific place called heaven. You see the inhabitants were so constituted that the hell of fire and brimstone was, for them, the ultimate paradise. Stanislaw Lem also provides a brilliant criticism of conventional notions of time travel in the same compilation of short stories.

Interactive-determinism

The conventional notion of 'determinism' is that of fate, the 'expression' of some 'plan', or mechanical algorithm. The conventional scientific concept of determinism is one where the 'precedent' condition or state simply 'resolves' its inbuilt tensions, into the following or antecedent condition. The conventional historical determinism is the resolution of inbuilt conflicts between a thesis and its antithesis in their synthesis.

However in my more precise model, propergents are constantly being produced, and these then interact with the antecedently produced propergents, that is, those that were produced earlier, in producing an 'inter-deterministic environment'. This interdeterministic environment is constantly evolving. It is dynamic. Interactive determinism cannot be represented by some existing machine. To represent inter-determinism, or in other words the true nature of determinism, the machine itself would have to constantly 'evolve'.

Under the condition of interactive-determinism, the antecedent condition interacts with the conditions it produces. It interacts with an environment which it is both produced by, and actively produces. The antecedent set of determinants themselves are epiphenomenal stages in a continual process. There is no 'final state' or 'ultimate resolution'. There is merely a continual process of tension and resolution, or interaction and outcome, of precedents with their antecedents, which become the new precedents for the new antecedents their interactions will produce. This, I have lately 'discovered' was referred to as 'becoming' by the ancient western Greek philosophers and eastern Daoists.

Our response to the determinism of other natural laws

We accept the determinism of gravity, but we do not just lay down and stay down. We get up. We use gravity to serve our purposes. We adapt to it, and adapt it to our wants. We have response-ability towards gravity, even while we have no responsibility for gravity. Inter-active determinism is not the same as simple causation or pre-determined fate. The conventional concept of causation is uni-directional. Interactive determinism is multi-directional and iterative. What I have just written was determined by many factors. Now that it is written, it has the potential to interact with other deterministic factors to achieve the intended outcomes I desired, and which motivated all the effort, sacrifice, and risk-taking required to write it.

Our desires, our will is inherited as part of our holistic inheritance. Our ability to satisfy our desires is determined by our collective inheritance. Our optimism is inherited genetically, and either reinforced or inhibited by the rest of our holistic inheritance, our talents, abilities, intelligence, beauty, health, and available opportunities. We can therefore optimize our experience of life by redistributing the luck of our holistic inheritances in this life, and by offering each of us the optimal holistic inheritance in all our future lives.

Fertility, natural sex-selection, and post-partum depression

An egg is only available for fertilization only on the 15th day of the menstrual cycle. However sperm can survive up to 4 days. This means that women need to be most careful four days before and 3 days after this day. It is also possible to influence the sex of a child before conception. Female sperm survive longer. By having a large meal before sex you increase the chances of conceiving a male baby. By eating a large meal and a hot bath before sex you increase the odds of having a girl.

Endogenous opioids, the body's own opiate-like neuro-peptides, have receptors that opiates bind to. These natural opiates are produced during pregnancy and peak during labor. The effect is similar to a long-distance runner's high after a race. Levels of these natural pain-killers and mood-improves diminish immediately after child-birth. This can lead to a serious postpartum depression.

Determinism and response-ability

Determinism means there is no moral responsibility. However a recognition of TROONATNOOR empowers us with opportunities for response-ability. We can respond optimally to reality. We can institutionalize these responses for the less holistically informed. We can give these institutions response-ability. We can give the officers of these offices response-ability. Making people responsible for something without empowering them with response-ability is cruel. This is like forcing people to empathize with others suffering, while denying them the power to alleviate it in any way.

People believe in astrology *and* free will?

Even assuming that Astrologers can predict how lucky or otherwise you are going to be tomorrow. You are going to find out soon enough anyway. Seeing the future is pointless if you cannot change it. In any case, what is more notable is the fact that the same people who imagine that the stars, light-years away, can determine our fates, are the same people who deny determinism in general, and believe in free will. This is typical of human nature, the ability to hold completely inconsistent views, and to compartmentalize them. They exist parallel to each other, without ever coming into contact with each other in their thinking.

Puppet-Markus and Eckhart Tolle

I am not the only one who, like Buddha, identifies the ego as the main enemy of enlightenment and spiritual progress. Eckhart Tolle in his books 'A New Earth' and 'The power of now' writes: "Listen to people's stories and they could all be entitled 'Why I Cannot Be At Peace Now'. The ego doesn't know that your only opportunity for being at peace is now. Or maybe it does know and is afraid you may find this out. Peace, after all, is the end of the ego."

Tolle notes how most of the insane, hyperactive, compulsive behavior that defines everyday life simply goes unnoticed as it is 'normal'. Most human behavior is 'self-centered on a self that is pure illusion. It is therefore pathological and counterproductive.

Tolle's arguments remind me of my own, which I have since discovered are millennia-old. He reminds us to be constantly 'alert' to our emotions and thoughts as they arise, in the moment, in a detached and alert manner. Recently I've come to visualize myself as a puppet, with thoughts and emotions being the 'puppet-strings'. In this way I seek to detach from them as belonging to 'Markus' and his ego, and not my true nature. Tolle writes "Emotions and even thoughts become depersonalized through awareness. Their impersonal nature is recognized.

There is no longer a self in them. They are just human emotions, human thoughts. Your entire personal history, which is ultimately no more than a story, a bundle of thoughts and emotions, becomes of secondary importance and no longer occupies the forefront of your consciousness. It no longer forms the basis for your sense of identity. You are the light of Presence, the awareness that is prior to and deeper than any thoughts and emotions."

Once you overcome your ego enough to accept the reality of determination, it is easier to see how everything that you and others define as 'you', are simply a collection of ideas, emotions, happenings, conditions, situations, and experiences connected in your mind by memory, and an illusory sense of 'self'. You are not these things. They could have just as easily happened to someone else.

You can't take any responsibility for them, credit or discredit, any more than you could for the wind or sunshine. They 'happened' and continue to 'happen'. The illusion of self is the attachment to a sense of continuity of personality which doesn't exist. When you focus on the moment, and let memory of the 'past' and projection into a 'future' fall away, you are open to experiencing a reality of being that 'tags' the ego and 'self' as illusions, and allows an awakening to the authentic nature of your reality, which is reality per se.

I can't think of any unproblematic epithet to refer to that which is my true nature. Buddha began using the epithet "Tathagata" regarding Buddha. (To say 'himself' is problematic). I consider it appropriate to refer to 'Markus's' feelings, emotions, and experiences, in the third person. Of course I'd attract the attention of the psychiatric profession, were I to do so publicly and often. Like Buddha, I am careful to comment on what it is that I am or am not, as such categories don't reflect the reality of the situation, and trying to adapt them to reality would only produce 'neo-logisms', producing unproductive confusion and misrepresentation.

When asked: Is the world eternal? Is the world finite? Does the Tathagata (an epithet Buddha used for Buddha) exist after death? Is the self-identical with the body? Buddha described them as a net and refused to be drawn into it. He said that it was because he was free of bondage to all speculation and dogma that he had attained liberation. Such speculations, he said, are attended by fever, unease, bewilderment, and suffering, and it is by freeing oneself of them that one achieves liberation.

Tolle writes: "You are not your thoughts. You are the awareness behind the thoughts. In 'TWOEIGHTY-TWO' I talk of the potential for awareness. Awareness of your thoughts without being caught up in them is the first step to freedom. Only the present moment exists. Use mindfulness techniques to fully appreciate your surroundings and everything you are experiencing. Look and listen intently. Give full attention to the smallest details. Accept the present moment. It is resistance to the present moment that creates most of the difficulties in your life.

All forms are Impermanent. All structures are unstable. Compassion is the awareness of a deep bond between yourself and all creatures. "To meet everything and everyone through stillness instead of mental noise is the greatest gift you can offer to the universe." True salvation is freedom from negativity, and above all from past and future as a psychological need. Is suffering really necessary? Yes and no. If you had not suffered as you have, there would be no depth to you, no humility, no compassion.

Enlightenment means choosing to dwell in the state of presence rather than in time. It means saying yes to what is. This of course reminds us of Nietzsche and his affirmation of suffering, as a part of life.

The Dhammic religions share a belief in karma and rebirth, but there is no consensus on their nature. Buddhists speak of some continuity, like one flame producing another flame, but not in the form of any permanent consciousness that moves from life to life. Modern Hindus, on the other hand, refer to an eternal 'Atman' or soul that survives the death of the body and re-incarnates into a new body according to the good or bad karma it has accrued in its past lives.

Hindus believe that everything in the Universe is in a state of creation, maintenance or destruction. Thoughts are produced by the mind, followed, and discarded or replaced with new ones. Turiya is the state of pure consciousness in which the mind is not engaged in thinking but merely observing thoughts. A few days ago I defined this as my idea of meditation, and in fact it is the Hindu ideal. The person in this state acts in response to events, rather than with any thought process or 'intention', and as such their actions accumulate no karma. It is only 'intentional' acts that accumulate karma. This is a state of Moksha or liberation/release from attachment to the illusions which ultimately produce karma.

It is therefore 'rational' to observe 'rationality in thought, perception, and conduct', which defines the Jain ethics as the rational convergence of behavior with natural universal law. It is purely logical and rational to behave so and so. There is no question of external judgment or coercion. You behave so and so as you are convinced that it is best for you to behave so. Thus Jain philosophy represents what I call 'convergence' in 'TROONATNOOR'.

I believe that we may not reap what we sow in particular, but we cannot escape doing so in general. The world will be as we are. If we are ethical, we will produce a world defined by ethics, justice, and beauty. If we are unethical, we will produce a world defined by injustice and ugliness. Whether we experience it for only one life, or eternity, has no meaning in terms of our experience. Many people feel they can insulate themselves from the consequences of their behavior, but even if they manage to do so for this short life, can they be certain they won't 'reap what they have sown' for an eternity? There is no need to recourse to inventing heavens and hells. The world will be as we behave.

Herman Kuhn quotes the Tattvarthasutra in defining karma as "a mechanism that makes us thoroughly experience the themes of our life until we gained optimal knowledge from them and until our emotional attachment to these themes falls off". This complies with my own position regarding karma, if it existed. There would be no justice in punishing or rewarding people for acts they couldn't by definition not commit. Determinism of the actions of their egos, which are not them, would make punishing or rewarding a consciousness for the actions or intentions of the ego it is 'nailed' to, meaningless.

TROONATNOOR ON POWER

Power: Politics as the negotiation of meaning: power as the power to define

The more actively a person complies with, validates, and participates in the conventions of the society, the more positive a definition they can gain for themselves. This behavior is often referred to as 'politics'. Politics is fundamentally the negotiation of meanings. Of course such politics influence the distribution of material resources, but to focus on the material benefits can be misleading, as it mystifies the true nature of politics. The real currency of politics is power, the power to define things and the relationship between things, that is, meanings and definitions. It is this power to define things that is manifest in material benefits.

Power is ultimately the control over meaning, the power a particular entity has to define, and have things defined, in ways that serve its particular vested interests. The perceptions of interests are often shared by groups of individuals who belong to the same socio-economic-status groups. The groups will become defined at some level by these common interests. The groups will then share common interests in particular definitions. Definitions that are shared by the most powerful groups become dominant or hegemonic. Via this hegemony, the powerful groups impose meanings and definitions upon the wider society.

Those who want powers and privileges will have to, at least nominally and publicly, comply with, and subscribe to, the definitions and meanings of those with the power to bestow such privileges and powers. The king will adopt a religion and its Pope, if that pope has the power to validate and legitimate his rule as King. The King's feudal vassals will comply with whatever the King demands in return for having some power and privilege bestowed upon them, as the King's men.

The whole social order will comply with the hegemonic definitions, meanings, and order that is handed down to them. Failure to do so will mean exclusion from any power and privilege. Ultimately, if you fail to validate the hegemonic meanings and relationships of the dominant powers, then you will be outcast, ostracized, and abandoned to die on your own. If you voice active opposition to the hegemonic ways of being and seeing, then you will certainly be extirpated via a 'fate worse than death', such as public torture and burning, or by being hung, drawn and 'quartered'. (They tie your arms and legs to four different horses and tear you apart!)

Of course these days you simply lose any chance of working in your profession, at best, and at worst, any chance of earning a living at all.

They will define you as 'mentally ill' and 'unfit' for service. You will be reduced to poverty, and be forced to endure the hell of never having your experiences 'validated'. You will be told, everyone will be told, that your experiences of victimization and mobbing 'never happened'. You will be deprived of any status. You will be relinquished to the absolute lowest status that can be ascribed to someone in a welfare state, that of 'the mentally ill', and 'unemployable'. You will be dependent on 'social security'. You will be dependent upon the very society that victimized you, allowed you to be victimized, and then denied you any validation of your experience, denied you, in fact, reality. The same society that punished you for trying to do the right thing, will insist that you 'play along'.

If you don't 'recant' and 'pretend it never happened, pretend 'there are no problems', that the only problem is your 'mental health', you will never have a chance at being 'rehabilitated'. The only way out of the situation would be to play along with them, and 'get better', that is, learn to go along to get along. It is a sickening thought for the sort of person who risks being victimized in the first place by doing what they thought was right, and therefore 'should' do. Such a person doesn't 'play along' with lies simply to make their own life easier.

Your life will have, for all intensive purposes, been taken from you. Most of your personal relationships and social network will be poisoned by your new 'status', and almost everyone's inability to 'validate' your experience. You will end up facing a more sophisticated 'fate worse than death' than those dissidents and whistle-blowers before you. You will even be denied euthanasia. In fact the fact that you will seek death as preferable to the torture of post-

traumatic-stress-disorder and social and financial ruin, will be used to justify the victimization you endured. See, they will exclaim, that proves what we said all along! That person is insane!

Now you will be living a 'fate worse than death'. Who, tell me, who, would dare speak up about 'problems' after seeing how 'whistle-blowers' are victimized? This is the reason they cannot be allowed access to euthanasia. Living whistle-blowers suffering fates worse than death are a constant reminder to anyone considering blowing the whistle on their employer, boss, or colleagues.

The outcomes of hegemony and the desire for power and privilege, of unequal genetic, social, and economic inheritances, have been racism, sexism, nationalism, sexual-orientationism, anthropocentric and ethnocentric religions, and opportunistic exploitation. This power has been used to benefit particular vested interests at the expense of those not belonging to these powerful, dominant hegemonic 'interest groups'.

Let us consider the definition 'Female'. The female has been defined by the Patriarchal male as sub-ordinate to males, less important, less significant, less valuable, 'morally' inferior, and therefore unworthy of equality. Females have been delegated the most unrewarding, uninteresting, undesirable, and strenuous work. They have been defined as the property of their fathers, and then their husbands, and subordinate to their brothers. They have been defined as the 'weaker' sex. In many instances they have been denied the legal right to inherit family property. They have been defined as child bearers, lovers, mothers, and wives. They have been defined as irrational and therefore unable to wield influence and power. They have been denied the right to vote and to an education. They have been 'married off' to secure favorable alliances for parents. They have been sold off to service the sexual and domestic needs of males. They have been ascribed the blame for all the ills of this world, for original sin, and all the calamities and hardships that befall mankind. Remember Eve, and Pandora?

'Do you not realize that Eve is you? The curse God pronounced on your sex weighs still on the world. Guilty, you must bear its hardships. You are the devil's gateway, you desecrated the fatal tree, you first betrayed the law of God, you softened up with your cajoling words the man against whom the devil could not prevail by force. The image of God, the man Adam, you broke him, it was child's play to you. You deserved death, and it was the son of God who had to die!' With this Tertullian voices the Christian view of women in 'Discipline, Moral & Ascetical Works' (Trans. R. Arbessman) from Ken Humphreys 'Jesus Never Existed'. See 'Religion' for details.

The initial physical superiority of males many thousands of years ago has been institutionalized, over millennia, into a social definition of males as superior to females. Females have become defined as deserving of less power and privilege than males. This institutionalization of male superiority allowed men to continue to dominate women well after any 'natural' superiority had ceased to be relevant. Today there is no significant difference between males and females that would justify defining females as generally inferior to males.

The institutionalized relations of power, however, still frustrate the practical recognition of this situation. The institutionalized relations are defended by males who perceive it as in their interests to maintain their dominance through political-economic power. Some females feel comfortable in their gender role. Some feel threatened by the demands and expectations of newer roles. For this reason many females also support these institutionalized sets of relationships.

Under 'caste' systems, actors are defined according to the family they were conceived into. An actor's caste will determine what rights and privileges they will enjoy, and what inequalities and restrictions they will suffer. Under this system of repression the religious doctrine of 'Karma' is used to justify the inherited inequality as 'morally' deserved.

People are conceived into a higher caste, according to the doctrine of Karma, as a reward for living past lives well. Being conceived into a lower caste is defined as the result of bad karma, which you suffer for having lived past lives badly. The positive spin put on this is that karma and reincarnation offer the chance to earn a better incarnation next time around. This 'belief' serves the interests of the privileged 'castes' by motivating people, coercing them really, into compliance with the hegemonic system.

The only way to 'earn' good karma is by accepting your inherited inequalities as legitimate, and cheerfully submitting yourself to exploitation. Of course in principle Karma should motivate the privileged castes to treat the less privileged castes well. But this goes against human nature. In reality it really fosters an attitude of contempt in the privileged towards those they exploit. They, like their U.S Calvinist-Protestant counterparts, simply define the poor as deserving of their bad luck. Under the tenets of Hindu Karmic law, you deserve your low-caste status, having 'earned' it in a previous life. Under Calvinism, god rewards the 'righteous' and punishes the unrighteous. Reflexively, this defines the poor as unrighteous, worthy of the contempt of, and unworthy of the respect, help, or consideration of, the lucky, the fortunate, the successful.

Under the caste system females can be burnt alive for not entering into arranged marriages, or for seeking out a lover themselves, one not approved of by the family. Under such a system very young girls are routinely 'married off' to old men. Similar 'rules' apply in traditional Saudi society.

Under traditional Judaeo-Christianity, the King was ordained by the priest as the god chosen power. Men were assigned dominance over the 'weaker sex'. There was a clear hierarchy of powers and rights associated with offices and ranks. All were subjects of, and hence subjected to, the king. Those subjects, as officers of the king, could compel the less privileged persons to do their bidding, as officers of the crown.

A complex system of privileges and obligations re-iterate, reinforce, and reflexively legitimate, the dominant, hegemonic order via the distribution of benefits among the beneficiary classes. Everyone wants 'in' on this scam, so few people challenge the system.

All humans had the god given right to exploit nature, as god had created it for them to exploit. This social system was defined simply as the 'natural' or 'god given' order of things.

Anyone challenging this order was defined as a heretic, an enemy of god and the state. They were routinely tortured and burnt alive for any sort of interrogation or questioning of the hegemonic system of definitions and relations. This behavior was known as 'impiety'.

A few powerful people had too many privileges at stake to allow anyone to question anything. Once the people started thinking, they might not stop. Even the slightest threat had to be 'nipped in the bud'. Being an atheist, a homo-sexual, or even a humanist, all represented a rejection of the god given order. This god given order provided the powerful all manner of luxuries and privileges and powers. The powerful were very pious, therefore, in defending God's order.

Those people who did interrogate the dominant hegemonic order were cruelly tortured and burnt alive. Others had their internal organs ripped out and were skinned alive in front of their own children, who later suffered the same torture.

The ones that managed to avoid this eventually ushered in the idea of parliamentary democracy. Under this system the people got to vote for their four-year dictators and kings. The 'government' was defined as having the right to raise taxes, and to force its 'citizens' to go and kill and be killed by 'citizens' of 'other' 'countries'. This government could decide what was legal, what was illegal, and who got what and who missed out. The government was generally full of people who enjoyed great power and privilege, and who acted to advance their own narrow interests, via lobbying for and promoting the interests of the wider, hegemonic beneficiary classes.

Definitions as the basis of all interactions

Definitions form the basis for individual intentions and motivations, interactions with the non-human world, and social interactions such as legal systems, education systems, cultural norms, social values, relationships and practices. Hegemonic power is wielded by those able to control how things are defined. Ideally, from their position of power and privilege, the definitions they 'construct' are accepted by the popular culture as 'self-evident', and 'natural'. This is the ultimate, hegemonic power. It is hidden power. Nobody is aware that they wield it. There is no reason for anyone to interrogate these definitions, let alone consider challenging them, or their architects, their authors, their engineers, their beneficiaries.

The hegemonic definitions are taken for granted, and in no way associated, by most people, with the relations of power, or the privileges these accord the hegemonic elites. Their right to power and privilege is as self-evident as the definitions are. The definitions and the systems of relations, the systems which distribute costs and benefits, and powers and privileges, are intricately, reflexively, and re-iteratively interwoven. The definitions legitimate a model of the world that validates and legitimates their beneficiaries' positions of power and privilege within it.

This is not to say that even those in power realize where their power comes from. Most people inherit privileges and wealth which provide them with influence, and power. They themselves may take the definitions for granted. They have little motive to question the inherited definitions. These are the same definitions that legitimate their privileges and power. These definitions massage their egos. These definitions define them as special, deserving of privileges, as superior, legitimate wielders of power. These definitions define their opportunistic exploitation of those with poorer inheritances as a natural, normal, justified, legitimate, part of the 'God-given' order.

In fact these definitions define them as being favored by none other than god himself. The beneficiaries are not going to argue with such definitions. So most of the privileged unquestioningly inherit the hegemonic definitions they are the beneficiaries of. They passively re-produce them as they legitimate them with their own power, and pass them on to the next generation, as part of their holistic inheritance. Often those in power have no idea themselves that the definitions are nothing but natural, self-evident truths. They have no idea how problematic they are, nor do they have any reason to interrogate them.

It is only the exploited, those who bear the costs of the hegemonic definitions and the system of relations they produce, who have a motive to de-construct the hegemonic social reality. If I had been conceived to a middle class family I would have had little motive to become the philosopher that I am.

Few people will question a world that welcomes and rewards them. Of course I was conceived into unfortunate circumstances. I began, early in my life, wondering why some had it so bad while others had it so good. I rarely felt welcomed. I was among the underprivileged, so I had good reason to question what was going on. It took me decades to learn a way of approaching my 'vocation', and I only kept at it for decades because I was constantly victimized. I was basically 'pushed' to continue. I could either kill myself, become a terrorist, or 'express', and try to 'transcend', the violence I suffered by attempting to interrogate it, reveal it, illuminate it, and eliminate it.

I want to 'inform' people as to what they are implicitly giving their 'consent' to. Then they can be held accountable. I want people to be held accountable for their actions, so they will consider the consequences of them. There must be appropriate consequences, otherwise people will not reliably and consistently act with consideration for the interests of others.

Life has brought me enough self-knowledge and knowledge of others to realize that humans have no true 'moral' intention. Goodwill is inconsistent, unreliable, and too fragile a 'motivation' to rely on. It is also questionable whether most people can be 'holistically enlightened' enough to be able to act in their own enlightened self-interest. I hope to provide everyone with holistically informed consent. However the first step is to make those able of exercising their informed consent, more able of doing so.

We need to transform our definitions before we can transform the systems of relations which they reflexively and iteratively reinforce and are re-produced by, and which they reflexively and iteratively re-produce.

Most of the inherited definitions have been institutionalized. They are 'embedded' in the popular language culture. They are the taken for granted 'back-drops' of everyday life. They constitute and re-produce the hegemonic social reality. The real 'action' is seen to be taking place elsewhere, so no-one pays much attention to the 'scenery'. The current actors merely inherit the institutions and the definitions they are reflexive of. The actors are merely passively acting within the antecedent conditions that they have inherited. In the same way that a person may experience advantage or disadvantage as a result of their genetic and cultural inheritance, individual actors and groups sharing similar positions in society, defined variously as gender, sexual orientation, class, status, ethnic, and socioeconomic-status, experience advantage or disadvantage as a result of the definitions current at the time of their social action.

There are rules which are good for the goose, and those that are good for the gander. One of the privileges of power and wealth is that you tend to be 'exempt' from the rules that 'the rest' must comply with. This exemption is rarely explicit. It takes the form of special treatment, 'old-school-ties', insider information, connections, expensive legal counsel, clever accountants, and so on. The privileged run the show, and they look after 'their own'.

Let us consider the definition of 'property', and 'slave'. Historically a person captured in war could be defined as the property of their captor. The 'owner' had no obligations to the 'slave'. The slave was the property of the owner, to be exploited in serving the interests of the owner. The slave was defined as 'human capital'. The slave was not defined as a person with rights. The slave could be bought and sold. The children conceived to these slaves, as the product of things the slave-owner already owned, automatically became the 'property' of the slave owner. They inherited the same situation as their parents. They had no rights.

Little less than two hundred years ago these definitions and the systems of relations they were reflexive of, were hegemonic, taken for granted as the natural order of things. We have no problem identifying what is 'wrong' with a system of relations and definitions in which one person could legally own another, and their children. Reference to such an example should produce in you an awareness of how 'culturally conditioned' our acceptance of definitions is. Hopefully it might help prepare you to consider that many of the definitions that we take for granted today might be equally problematic.

There are many other examples, such as the right of women to own property, chose their own husband, gain an education, be allowed to practice a profession, be allowed to decide if, when, and how many children they will have, to take part in free and fair elections, to wear what they want, to go out without the company of a man or chaperon, to initiate relationships including sexual relationships, to expect to be treated as an equal by a man, to be able to give evidence in court, to be able to expect sexual satisfaction from their partner, to be able to choose sexual and marriage partners from either sex, to be able to run for political office, and so on. Few reasonable people would challenge any of these things, today. Of course most of these were unthinkable in any society you could name up until very recently. If you had merely suggested that women might have a right to such obvious human rights a few decades, let alone centuries ago, you would have been ridiculed, or worse, defined as 'mentally ill'. If you don't believe me, then do some research into this subject.

I could go on and on, using examples of genocide, colonialism, racism, homo-phobia, and so on, to further make my point. I hope you get it, and are at least a little prepared to look upon our current definitions with the same open-mindedness that you can look at these historical examples. I hope you might become empowered to imagine how future generations might find many of our current definitions and the systems of relations they are reflexive of, equally unbelievable.

Escaping the loop: hegemonic power and challenging it

All human interactions involve the 'negotiation' of meanings. It is through this negotiation that experience is 'constructed'. Politics is the negotiation of meanings. The product of such negotiations is the distribution of costs and benefits. The more power you have, more influence you have in this negotiation. Reflexively and iteratively, the more power you have in these negotiations, the more power you have. This means you have greater influence over what sort of 'social reality' is constructed.

You get to play god. You get to 'impose' a social reality upon everyone else in which you are deserving of privileges and power, including the power to define. Your social reality, your definitions, your relations, all become dominant and hegemonic. This hegemonic social reality will be inherited by all participants in social interactions. In most cases it will be simply taken for granted by all those participating, and will be, in effect, their personal subjective reality.

Of course not everyone accepts the dominant social reality, and many will try to negotiate new definitions and relationships. Everyone wants a piece of the action. Not everyone will accept the hegemonic set of relations, and their distributions of costs and benefits, burdens and privileges, and distributions of power. Some participants not belonging to the dominant group, and hence not deriving power and privilege from the current status quo, will challenge the dominant order. They will seek to challenge its hegemony.

Every time you challenge any particular definition, you are ultimately a threat to the holistic set of definitions which support the status quo and its hegemonic domination. Every time you challenge a particular set of relations you are challenging the dominant group's hegemony. You are threatening their privileges and power. And as the dominant groups hegemony has naturalized the status quo as the 'God-given order', the best of all possible worlds, you will find yourself defined by virtually everyone as a threat to their 'values' and 'way of life'.

Religion may subvert social justice, and legitimate all manner of opportunistic exploitation, but it provides emotional comforts to many people. The majority of U.S citizens, the most opportunistic, market driven, worldly, consumption oriented population on this planet, still claim to believe in God. When Teddy Roosevelt, then U.S President, gave permission to the federal treasury to 'mint' a one penny coin without the slogan 'In God we trust', embossed upon it, there was such a public outcry that he had to recall the design, and re-add the slogan.

Try to always remember that, at the most basic levels of composition, the fundamental determining factor in the generation of particular meanings is the interaction between the algorithms of each participant, their genetic and culturally inherited meanings, and the algorithm defined by the interaction itself. During interactions propergens manifest which were latent or unrealized within the participating algorithms.

This is to say that both algorithms and meanings may be modified as a result of their interaction. This has implications for quantum physics. It has long been recognized that the mere measurement of something can change what is being measured. The interaction itself is algorithmic. It is interaction per se which is the basis of all propergens.

The forces of attraction and repulsion are the fundamental algorithms. All apparently complex algorithms are simply composite forms of attraction and repulsion, addition and subtraction, accumulation and erosion, integration and dis-integration, multiplication and division.

Every time we interact we either implicitly accept the definitions we have inherited, and which form the background to the popular culture, implicitly assuming them to be valid, or we challenge them. Critical theories are by nature 'critical' of them, challenging them, interrogating them, applying intellectual rigor to them. This is what this book is all about.

Holistic interrogation is about interfacing with the popular culture on a critical level. The idea is to try to find out what assumptions have been made, and whether they are valid. Like a detective we seek to discover who is responsible for the status quo, by identifying who benefits from it, who has a motive to construct and reproduce it.

Once we have made the whole transparent, by escaping the loop, by discovering what occurred before the loop was closed, and thus seeing through the 'card-trick', we will have the option of granting this system of relations and definitions our holistically informed consent, or of constructing a new system of relations and definitions. I believe most people will 'err on the side of justice', however it is possible that people desire inequality and injustice, even if it is statistically probable that during most lives people will be footing the bill for other people's benefits.

TROONATNOOR ON DRUGS

The phenomenon called '*smoking*'

Studying the phenomena of smoking and the whole constellation of tobacco related interactions yields rewarding insights into the nature of human psychology, and the group psychology that emerges from it. Perhaps no other secular activity is so defining of human interactions than smoking.

Smoking is a powerful drug addiction, and yet it has, for centuries, maintained an image as a satisfying 'lifestyle' choice, associated with great sex appeal, vitality, and success. Smoking has been recognized for centuries, privately, as being a filthy habit, and yet it has rarely been prohibited from private or public spheres. Passive smoking, that is, forced tobacco consumption, has been the result, with non-smokers being forced to consume deadly and disgusting tobacco smoke.

Smokers themselves express a desire to quit, due to the health problems they personally experience, and yet they force others to consume toxic tobacco smoke, and to suffer these very same health problems. These others include their own family, friends, workmates, lovers, children, and total strangers.

Smokers have constantly denied the rights of others to a smoke-free environment, even in environments where non-smokers had no choice but to remain, these situations or environments being a place of work, the family home, a shopping center, or even place of education. Smokers have throughout history insisted, and many continue to insist, on their right to smoke wherever they like, with whatever consequences this behavior has for others who are forced to share place and space with them.

I personally experienced Army Officers smoking next to ammunition and explosives storage areas where the dangers were clearly signposted, and smoking was explicitly prohibited. My mere subtly formulated and gently expressed questions regarding the existence of smoking regulations, which were clearly posted all over the army bases, brought me threats of charges of 'insulting senior officers'. Back at base I was threatened with false charges of insulting officers.

Sociologists might refer to this sort of behavior euphemistically as 'informal workplace practices'. This is like calling a lynch mob an informal court. It is, simply put, mobbing and victimization. There is nothing harmless about it. It is an ugly and devastating form of violence. People have lost their livelihoods, their careers, and even their lives due to forced tobacco-smoke consumption, and attempts to have their rights to breathe air free of toxic tobacco smoke respected. I was lucky that the Australian Public Service had introduced, not long before I began working there, a policy on smoke-free workplaces, and luckier still that I ended up in a head office in Canberra that actually complied with that policy.

Others have not been so lucky. For example the story of the young man employed by the N.S.W State TAB. He was forced to endure a forced tobacco smoke consumption, due to the 'informal workplace practices' of his T.A.B colleagues who felt confident about contravening the State Government policies on smoke-free workplaces. You can read about his story at the whistle-blowers web-page.

The insistence on the right to smoke, and the denial of non-smokers rights to not be forced to smoke, provides a transparent insight into the human psyche. The ego demands that a self-perception is maintained of being in control, thereby rejecting any perception of being a pathetic drug addict, controlled by the addiction, and manipulated by simple advertising techniques. The ego acts as a selective filter, demanding the denial of reality.

Applying reason to the arguments concerning smoking is frustrating, as the case has always been clear that smokers do not have the right to inflict their addiction on nonsmokers, to force others to consume their toxic smoke. There has never been a compelling reason for forcing people to endure 'passive' smoking, to be forced to consume tobacco products. The arguments have always been specious. That nonsmokers have accepted their lot is also revealing about human nature and its propergerents in interaction, that is, social psychology.

Smug complacency has defined the position of smokers and the smoking lobby, especially prevalent in its marketing. The situation is partly a propergerent of the human desire to appear to be enjoying life, to be gaining

satisfaction from life, to be enjoying success. Thus cigarettes were everywhere and at every time exclusively marketed as status goods.

Tobacco advertising has always played on the desire for status, to appear successful. It is no accident that smoking is more prevalent amongst the least successful members of society. Tobacco marketing has always employed images of the most successful people in its advertising. It pays the highest status members of our society, the symbols of sex and success, our movie stars, to smoke on the big and little screen.

Movie producers often rely on the financial support of tobacco 'product placements' to finance their movies. The most expensive movie of its time, *Titanic*, was part-financed through such tobacco 'product placements'. It is a lucrative sideline that few people were aware of until recently. People merely accepted that our modern demi-gods smoked in the movies. Even I found smoking to be sexy. I know people today who still find smoking sexy.

Only recently people in the movie business had admitted to taking money from the tobacco industry in exchange for 'scripting' tobacco consumption into the movie plot. Think of some of the most memorable images of the media, and you will find tobacco products. James Dean is holding a cigarette in most of his most famous photos. Can you think of a movie star that didn't, at some time in their career, 'light up'?

People are still surprised when actors admit to having taken money from the tobacco industry to smoke in their films. I am talking about actors that don't actually smoke themselves. Of course many of them 'bought into' the whole 'image' of 'tobacco as sexy', themselves. They are themselves addicts.

Smoking advertising generally appeals to people who are lacking success, self-esteem, and intrinsic life satisfaction. Advertising works on the principle of status transfer. By behaving like the successful, smug, self-satisfied, sexy, rich-looking, and often famous, advertising models, by smoking, consumers are lead to believe that they too can at least appear sexy and successful.

Such ads appeal to the fundamental need for acceptance and approval. They 'consume' the image, the 'status', at least as much as the addictive nicotine. In fact, have you ever seen a tobacco advertisement that was actually selling tobacco?

Tobacco advertising is also designed to tap into the need to feel purposeful. The act of satisfying oneself through the purposeful act of taking out and lighting a cigarette appeals to people who have no real purpose, and who are self-conscious and concerned about how they are being perceived by others around them.

The actual act of taking out a cigarette, lighting it, taking a puff, and holding it, all help the smoker feel less self-conscious. They have something to do with their hands. They are too self-conscious just to be. They need to be doing something, to distract themselves and others. It also gives socially unsure and awkward people an excuse to interact with others, as they 'share a light' or 'share a fag'. Often they are doing so in violation of some code, such as school rules, which provides them with a sense of status, of being 'rebels'.

They feel socially unsure and insecure. They fear that the reality of their lives will be perceived by those around them. Partly for this reason smokers mutually support their smoking, as they are all in the same position. As a group they seek to define their lives, through their 'purposeful' actions of smoking and deriving public satisfaction from their rewarding 'lifestyles', as successes. They seek, through the status transfer of advertising, to promote the definition of themselves as successful, purposeful, satisfied people. Smoking is an act of manufacturing collective ignorance, where consensus is produced in collaboration with tobacco marketing. Remember that to be seduced, you have to be willing to be seduced. You can't blame the seducer! The 'interests' of big tobacco and the little smoker thus converge on many levels.

The Tobacco companies find willing co-conspirators in smokers, who are keen to accept the definitions offered to them by the tobacco companies and their advertising agencies.

In this way the addicts consume the image they are offered eagerly and without resistance. The nicotine is only one addiction. Cigarettes are 'nicotine delivery systems', but they are also 'status (image) transfer systems'.

The image is the greater addiction. This is obvious, given the existence of products which can supply nicotine without the tobacco. People have continued to 'smoke' nicotine in spite of the ready availability of nicotine

'patches' and nicotine gum. In other words, the smoker is more addicted to the psychological and social 'benefits' or rewards of smoking than they are to the effects of the nicotine. This is what multi-billion dollar marketing budgets over many centuries have achieved. They have made their mark on 'social reality', on the dominant, hegemonic system of definitions and relations.

Don't forget that most political parties and politicians are indebted to the tobacco industry for billions of dollars in political campaign donations. The tobacco industry is the archetypal 'big business', microcosm of, and model for, capitalism.

Governments have also traditionally gained revenue from tobacco excises, so they have had a historical and continual vested interest in the tobacco 'industry of lies and suffering'.

Employers have historically had little interest in the well-being of their workers, and have feared that the withdrawal symptoms resulting from banning smoking would impact on the worker's performance, were they not allowed to constantly feed their addiction. A similar experience occurred in Russia when authorities attempted to limit the supply of Vodka, but gave up after factories came to a standstill, the majority of workers being unable to function without a supply of their drug. The armed forces have had the same sort of vested interests, obviously not having great concern for their 'cannon fodder', and fearing the inability of their soldiers to concentrate and function as weapons of the state, were they to be denied constant access to their drug of addiction.

Even nonsmokers did not wish to define their partners, parents, friends, work mates, and lovers, as drug addicts. They therefore perversely denied themselves their own rights. Asserting their rights would be to implicitly define the actions of their associates as pathetic and feeble, and by association, implicate themselves. In other words, to promote a positive public definition of themselves they were forced into publicly supporting the habits of their associates, who thereby had majority public support for their unethical behavior. In this way a transparently evil industry and activity gained a public definition of acceptability, even if, in private, it was defined as undesirable, sometimes even diabolical.

The public debates surrounding the tobacco issues are fatuous in the extreme, guided as they are by the principles outlined above, and having no value as compelling arguments. Those who dared publicly apply reason to the issues were mocked by a smug and complacent majority.

In reality the smokers and their associates were desperately cornered by the truth, forced to defend their egos. The defense of the ego is the most desperate of all defenses. Drug addicts are always co-conspirators with their drug dealers in this sense. The tobacco companies, the drug dealers, benefit from the nature of the human ego in this way.

In the face of all compelling argument and evidence, the desire to construct a positive self-image has priority. Lies are readily consumed where they promote a positive self-definition, and so they gain currency, with their 'users' becoming addicted to these lies.

This is a principle of human nature, and is manifest in religion, nationalism, sexual-orientationism, speciesism, racism, sexism, anthropocentrism, and so on. The tobacco phenomena is merely one manifestation of the seduction of self-deception and denial. Advertising and lobbying merely support and promote the self-deception of their demographic, their target audience, and the wider public. Lobbyists and advertisers opportunistically take advantage of this sort of human weakness. Advertising is, after all, the satisfaction of delusions for which an appetite already exists. It is these delusions that are consumed, at least as readily as the nicotine.

To smokers. You have no right to hurt others. You have the choice of whether to smoke in any particular place. Non-smokers do not have a choice about having to breathe in any particular place. Humans must breathe! You are introducing a toxic pollutant into the environment. You have the obligation to restrict the consumption of these poisons to those who have given their informed consent to consume them.

It is disgusting of you to wish that others suffer because you will not exert yourself to stop smoking. Subconsciously you are willing that those around you suffer what you do. Perhaps you hate yourself, and envy non-smokers. The case of forced tobacco consumption is a form of violence. It is sad but true that people can be so small

and mean. Smoking is no isolated phenomena, it is an expression of the same natures expressed in so many other forms of social interaction, governed by lies, smug, complacent, denial, and the construction of hegemonic social realities.

It is perhaps significant that the large Collins German-English, English-German Dictionary uses the following explanation to define the term 'obsessed': 'he was obsessed about others smoking around him'. This shows the ubiquitous extent of the defining activities surrounding the culture of smoking, blatantly deriding and belittling persons opposed to being forced to consume deadly and disgusting tobacco products. It is also significant that the term for a pause or break has become taking a 'smoko'. During my Army Reserve training, the trainers would signal a break by instructing us with 'those of you who smoke, do so, and those of you who don't, go through the motions'.

A clever ploy adopted by smokers and the tobacco lobby has been to define public areas, including bars and restaurants, as recreational areas, thus focusing on the rights of the public to smoke and enjoy themselves, to 'recreate'. In reality they are places of employment. A shift in defining recreational areas as work places reveals that workers are being exposed to health risks that are unacceptable in all other work situations. Thus smoking in these contexts is in reality a question of the rights of workers to a safe workplace, a question of work-place health and safety, rather than of the rights of smokers to enjoy themselves.

This is an example of the subtle ways in which erroneous or mystifying definitions or meanings are constructed and become slippery artifacts for interrogation. It is only when a shift takes place in focus that the reality is revealed. You have to step out of the teleological self-reinforcing loop in order to reveal the mystification that has taken place within the loop. When we step outside the loop, the whole argument de-constructs, and assumptions are revealed as invalid, false, erroneous, and most likely disingenuous specious sophistry.

Disingenuous means not genuine or sincere. A Specious argument appears compelling at first, but falls apart upon interrogation. Sophistry refers to arguments deliberately constructed to mislead and mystify, rather than promote transparency and clarity.

Arguments are diverted from the real issues into agendas that suit the tobacco lobby and the drug addicts desire to pursue their addictions while having them defined as a positive recreation or satisfying lifestyle, rather than as an aggressive health hazard and drug addiction.

Up until recently few people were aware of the huge amounts of money that the tobacco industry paid to film and television producers to have the characters in their productions smoke cigarettes. The characters were sexy, witty, cool, charming, in control, successful, independent. The stars of the movies and series were sex symbols and heroes.

Everyone wanted to be like them. By getting them to smoke, the sponsors were taking advantage of the association effect, of image or status transfer. Film and T.V was effectively exploited to promote smoking to people of all ages, without directly advertising anything. What they were doing was actively and deliberately constructing the act of smoking as a cool, sophisticated, sexy thing to do. Observe for yourself how often stars of the big and small screen reach for tobacco products.

How many of them have emphysema, impotence, gangrene, or cancer? None. They are all cool, calm, sexy, in control, successful, admirable. You want to be like them. Smoking lets you. 'Product placement' is a form of subliminal advertising. Subliminal advertising has been proven to be so effective that in other contexts it has been banned. For this reason many tobacco corporations are turning to 'product placement' to market their nicotine delivery systems. It is also a way of getting around laws in some countries banning the direct marketing of tobacco products. Of course they also employ sexy young women to hand out free samples at nightclubs, and even on public streets.

The fact that tobacco companies are willing to spend millions of dollars to place their products unobtrusively in film and television, attests to its effectiveness. Even without market research analyses, anyone can see for themselves that this must be an effective way to market tobacco. Otherwise why would the tobacco companies spend billions on it?

It is only recently that the practice has drawn any attention. Smoking advertising had been banned in many countries and in many situations. The tobacco industry claimed naive ignorance when challenged about the practices it engaged in. It was Hollywood insiders themselves who lifted the lid on the practices, and brought them into the awareness of the public. Many of these whistle-blowers suffered legal and illegal victimization for trying to do the right thing. The legal system prostituted itself to the tobacco companies by victimizing whistle-blowing ex-employees.

And the tobacco companies were not beyond employing less subtle forms of violence against whistle-blowers and their families. Billions of dollars are at stake. The tobacco industry is much more lucrative and damaging than the 'illegal' drug industry. The tobacco industry provide huge campaign contributions to politicians.

Further, politicians are offered, during their terms in office, and receive, after they have 'retired' from public office, 'consultancy' work, which is little more than 'appearance' money. Such 'employment' contracts are simply legal ways of paying bribes to politicians. This is how they are corrupted by lobby groups and big business to serve narrow vested interests, such as the alcohol, tobacco, pharmaceuticals, and armaments industries, at the expense of the wellbeing of their constituents, the general public.

The U.S and EEC administrations, at the time I wrote this, still subsidized tobacco production to the tune of billions of dollars!

Calls are being made for the same restrictions to be applied to film as to other forms of advertising. Of course the tobacco lobby cries its innocence. Of course the movie star heroes of children just reach for tobacco products as part of the story. And don't be misled, it is children that are the new target of the tobacco industry. Young people are ideal targets as they are more impressionable. They have the greatest need for social status and approval. They are the least secure in themselves as they deal with growing up. They are the least able to recognize how they are being manipulated. Their parents are struggling to stop smoking, and succeeding. The tobacco companies need fresh markets.

Joe Camel was one cynically deliberate marketing ploy designed to appeal to young girls. Joe Camel has been banned in many countries, sadly not yet in Germany. Germany is the only EEC nation without real protection of people who don't want to be forced to consume deadly tobacco products, what the industry dismissively calls 'passive smoking'. The notion of passive smoking brings to mind notions of passive burning, where someone burns a building down and you burn up with them. Of course the arsonist does you no harm in the process! You didn't have to enter that particular building did you! You had a choice, didn't you! The suffering resulting from 911 is insignificant compared to that produced by tobacco.

Sadly, U.S imperialism extends to forcing developing nation's governments to allow, as part of its trade agreements, advertising that is banned in the U.S. The tobacco industry has a powerful lobby group, a very generous one when it comes to financing political campaigns, and 'slush funds'. They offer extremely generously rewarded and cushy jobs to public officials and lawyers who do their bidding, who abuse their power, who prostitute themselves and the legal system, to the tobacco industry.

The tobacco and alcohol lobby and industry, and their 'lackey' politicians, have produced more human misery than any despotic dictator or oppressive regime ever did, and yet they are held up as respectable 'business-people', as 'pillars of the community'. If there is an approximation of evil anywhere in the universe, then its headquarters are the tobacco institute.

Some of us might still remember how, before smoking regulations were introduced to protect people from being forced to smoke, any person insisting on their rights to breathe was defined as being an intolerant, small minded, trouble seeker. The facts about smoking, and the logic of protecting people from being forced to smoke, have been around for a long, long, time. The smoking lobby today still insists on cynically attacking people who fight for the right to not be forced to smoke. They insist on the right of people to knowingly damage their own health, and that of their children, coworkers, friends, and those with whom they co-incidentally share place, space, and oxygen.

'The insider', and the insidious power of big Tobacco to ruin lives in the name of corporate profits

The movie 'The insider' tells the story of Jeffrey S Wigand, a former employee of Kentucky Tobacco Company Brown and Williams. He was employed to 'boost' the 'impact', to speed up the action, of the nicotine already in the tobacco, using ammonium chemistry. The industry was fully aware of the addictive nature of nicotine. He lost his job after expressing concerns about the health risks of the chemicals being used. He would not continue their use.

Of course there was no mention of this in his official personnel files. The official reason given for his retrenchment was 'poor communication skills'. I have had the same reported of me, along with 'inability to work as part of a team'. Of course by definition anyone who does not 'go along to get along' is not a 'team player'. Expressing the existence of problems is implicitly defined as 'poor communication skills'. A team player pretends there are no problems. A team player goes along with whatever the official fiction is, whatever lies management are peddling at the time. A good team player is an unprincipled opportunist. A good team player looks after their own, with complete disregard for 'public' interest.

As part of his final settlement with Brown and Williams, Wigand was required to sign a confidentiality clause which prohibited him from speaking to anyone about anything related to his previous employment with them.

Around this time the State of Mississippi were suing 'The Big Seven' tobacco companies. The State of Mississippi lawsuit was trying to recoup their Medicaid healthcare costs for tobacco related illnesses. They asked Dr Wigand to give testimony concerning the claims by the tobacco industry chief executives that cigarettes were not addictive. In fact cigarettes have always been treated as a 'nicotine delivery system' by tobacco companies. Their profits were dependent on their consumers becoming nicotine addicts.

Now the scope of the political power of the tobacco industry became clear. The extent of the political power of the Tobacco industry was revealed when it had government agents break into Wigand's house in the middle of the night to seize his personal computer as 'evidence', and got judges in Kentucky to issue a 'gag order', threatening Wigand with criminal prosecution, to stop him giving testimony or making a deposition at the Mississippi trial.

He was threatened with emails such as 'If you don't shut the fuck up we are going to kill you'. He found a bullet in his letter box.

The only way Wigand could legally 'blow the whistle' on his previous employer was by revealing this information as part of his deposition and testimony at a trial. He had signed a 'confidentiality agreement'. However this did not apply to evidence given in a court of law. The records of his testimony at a legal trial would be, by law, public. The information Wigand had was key to the Mississippi Health Department's case, and the most damning testimony against the Tobacco industry there had ever been. The tobacco industry, in court, had denied that the nicotine in their tobacco products was addictive.

Wigand had proof that the tobacco industry knew that nicotine was addictive. It had in fact had invested millions in nicotine 'impact boosting', increasing the addictiveness of nicotine. Wigand's testimony threatened to 'blow the whistle' on the lies of the tobacco industry's executives. The potential costs to the industry went into the tens of billions of dollars. Further, they had perjured themselves, and risked facing criminal charges.

'60 minutes' filmed an interview with Wigand, as part of an investigative journalistic report on the tobacco industry. Brown and Williams threatened to sue them for 'revealing sensitive or valuable information which could damage the company'. The irony was that if Wigand actually was right about his claims, the airing of the report would result in massive damage to Brown and Williams' business. This would entitle them to sue C.B.S. for such a large amount that they would end up owning C.B.S.

This reveals the hypocrisy within the legal system. A whistle-blower could be sued for doing the right thing by the public. The greater the public health risk they revealed, the greater the financial damage they would do to the tobacco industry, and hence the more this industry could sue the whistle-blower for. The Government would sue the tobacco companies for damages. The tobacco companies in turn would be entitled to sue the whistle-blower for the same amount. If this was not reality, it would be funny.

Under the current system, smokers ruin the health of their colleagues, family, and others who breathe their 'second-hand' smoke. These victims are then compelled to subsidize smokers and pay their medical costs. Every smoker was aware that smoking was addictive. However the point was a legal one. The case was about legal liability. The executives of the big seven tobacco companies had perjured themselves before every court they had ever appeared in, including the court in Mississippi. They had directly lied when asked if tobacco was addictive. The tobacco companies themselves had employed scientists like Wigand to research the health effects of tobacco. Their own research had proven decades before that smoking unequivocally caused cancer, and that nicotine was addictive. In fact it was the Nazi's who first identified the link between lung cancer and tobacco. Remember that nicotine is a poison. If an adult ate 8 cigarettes they would die. For a baby 1 would be lethal.

If the tobacco industry had admitted the health risks and addictiveness of their products, then there would have been no legal case. Consumers would have given their tacit 'informed consent', and would be responsible for their own decisions. However the industry had denied that tobacco caused cancer, and that nicotine was addictive. Thus consumers could 'play dumb' and sue them when they inevitably suffered the consequences of their own actions.

Ultimately C.B.S executives ordered Peter Jennings, the producer of '60 minutes' to edit the interview with Wigand out of their report. However the reason was not the lawsuit threatened by Brown and Williams. The more immediate motive was a planned Westinghouse 'takeover' of C.B.S which stood to provide them with massive windfall profits from their C.B.S shares and options. Overnight they would be worth tens of millions more. Westinghouse had threatened to back out of the deal if 60 minutes aired the interview with Wigand.

Most people are unaware that the boards of directors of the big companies are a fairly close-knit family. The same people sit on the boards of different companies. There are very few truly 'independent' companies. The owners of large companies have shared interests in each other. So the boards of directors of Westinghouse were indirectly putting influence on C.B.S, in the interests of the big tobacco companies.

The tobacco lobby used its political influence, the courts, and big business, all to keep one man from speaking up about a health issue of widespread public interest. The tobacco lobby had such power that they even managed to 'convince' the Governor of Mississippi to sue his own attorney-general in an attempt to get him to drop the lawsuit against the 'big seven' tobacco companies.

Of course whistle-blowers are special people. They are willing to risk their own security and wellbeing for the benefit of others. Like most whistle-blowers throughout history, Wigand had paid dearly for his integrity and goodwill. After losing his job his wife left him. She was granted custody of their children. Wigand was living in a hotel room at the time of the C.B.S interview. The tobacco industry employed lawyers and private detectives to carry out the typical 'character assassinations' and 'smear campaigns' associated with attempts to undermine the credibility of whistle-blowers.

Ultimately the producer of the actual report, Lowell Bergman was forced to take a 'leave of absence', after he insisted on going ahead with show. So Bergman 'blew the whistle' on his employer. He refused to let C.B.S corporate tell him what was news and what wasn't. He leaked the story to the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal. They printed Wigand's court deposition. However C.B.S still would not air the interview.

This story within the story should lead us to ask what other stories were researched and investigated, but never reported, never aired due to similar circumstances, similar 'conflicts of interest'. Of course the 'public interest' is of less concern to big business than their 'private interests'. The case of the tobacco 'debate' has so many levels and layers. It reveals so much about how our society operates.

Ultimately the 60 minutes anchor-man went on air and told the public what his own bosses, C.B.S corporate, had forced on 60 minutes, on C.B.S news. We should pause for a moment to note that the 'Unabomber' story, though the biggest 'news' at the time, was insignificant compared to the suffering the tobacco has industry produced.

The personal costs Wigand suffered of course send a clear signal to all potential whistleblowers not to blow the whistle. In this sense corrupt judges, politicians, and big business interests made their point, even as they lost some of their legal cases. Few people will ever dare risk paying such high personal costs, more or less sacrificing themselves for the 'public' good, for the benefit of others.

At the time of Wigand's persecution, big tobacco were paying over 600 million dollars yearly on outside legal fees. They had never lost a personal injury lawsuit. Their effective strategy was simply to tie up the victims in litigation. Eventually they would die, or accept 'out of court settlements' which required them to sign 'confidentiality agreements' with the tobacco companies. As such tobacco had never lost a case in court. It could claim that its products were not addictive. It could deny any health risks. For all legal purposes tobacco was a harmless product, and the tobacco companies were 'nice guys'.

Some good news. Recently a 300 Million U.S payout was awarded by courts to two individual claimants against Philip Morris.

Tobacco companies and smokers have successfully avoided having tobacco products defined as harmful drugs for hundreds of years. In doing so they have victimized innocent men, women, and children through forced tobacco consumption. In hindsight, observers will view the tobacco 'debate' with the same disbelief as we view the witch trials of the Middle Ages.

Tobacco product placements targeting teenage girls

The most insidious and invidious form of marketing tobacco products at the moment are 'product placements' targeting the most vulnerable demographic, teenage girls.

In the context of *Titanic*, the heroine's smoking is symbolic for her 'emancipation'. It is an expression of her independence from the films anti-hero, her fiancé, who it is intimated, has 'imprisoned' her. The hero of *Titanic*, Di-Caprio, the ultimate teenage girl heart-throb, also smokes in key scenes a-la James Dean, after saving her life, and during her 'freedom' dance, where she is learning to 'make every day count'.

Thus the context here is freedom and the assertion of independence. Of course these are key themes to teenage girls. I wonder how much the tobacco industry contributed to the production costs of *Titanic*, in order to get Kate Winslow and Leonardo Di-Caprio smoking on the big screen, and thereby marketing deadly tobacco products to teenage girls. Did they really need the money so much that they are willing to prostitute themselves to such drug dealers?

In a key scene, our heroine's fiancé, the rich, unlikeable, anti-hero, takes a cigarette from our sympathetic heroine, as an act of domination and control. In this context the anti-tobacco lobby are defined as tyrants, seeking to control teenage girls. The most empowering thing to do is therefore to smoke, to spite those seeking to control you.

This is a key issue for teenage girls. This anti-hero is mean and cruel to our hero, Di-Caprio. In the film context she has lit up a cigarette at the dinner table, without having asked anyone, even after her mother has reminded her that she does not like smoking. No-one else is smoking. Everyone is enjoying their meal. But she pays no heed. She simply lights up. This is of course inconsiderate and completely unacceptable. However the tobacco lobby had normalized it for centuries, and was seeking to re-normalize it via this film.

Who would dare come across as so arrogant as this anti-hero by asking someone not to smoke during dinner? In the film the 'meaning' of the fiancé taking the cigarette from our heroine is that he is seeking to control her. By smoking, she is refusing to be controlled, and is in fact asserting her freedom and independence. The message to teenage girls is that they can assert their independence and freedom by rudely smoking and poisoning anyone present. Asking someone not to smoke is unthinkable arrogant and selfish. This is the attitude towards passive smoking that only recently has been countered by laws, regulations, and the acceptance of the valid grounds for such restrictions. In *Titanic*, Smoking is part of the fun of life, and 'making every day count'. It is associated with romance and hot sex.

In a recent Hollywood film 'Spy girls', two of the four super-sexy girls smoke cigarettes with a great deal of attitude, but with absolutely zero context. The 'Spy girls' are four teenage secret agents. They are dressed in the sexiest outfits. They are pure power-girls, the absolute perfect 'role models' for girls. All teen girls, especially younger ones, would admire these figures and desperately want to emulate them.

It is no accident that the Asian one is the aggressive smoker. Remember it is the Asian market that big tobacco is targeting today, after having had its advertising limited in the West. The U.S and Britain, as part of trade deals, forced the Asian markets into allowing advertising campaigns which had been banned in the West, including Joe Camel, which directly target teenage girls. She is tough, cool, and rebellious. She takes no shit from anyone. Sexy. Smug. She is a pure power Asian Barbie. She is smoking.

The 'ditsy' blond asks her to put out. Black Barbie joins in with 'nonsense'. They are smoking in a totally sealed room. They have been locked in this air-tight room by baddies. Smug and complacent. Like all teens want to be, tough and independent. The Asian and the African girl are juxtaposed with the sweet, innocent, 'ditsy' European proto-type blond.

By forcing her to passive smoke they are demonstrating their superiority. Note that typically such a blue eyed blond is the girl every girl around the world wants to be like. By smoking and annoying her, they are getting 'the upper hand' over her, and over her entire 'type'.

In real life such smoking in such circumstances would not be found acceptable to anyone. It would in fact be illegal. There is absolutely no context for this smoking in the plot or narrative. It is pure product placement. It is the perfect vehicle to make tobacco more desirable. Again later the tough Asian girl has a 'smoke' in her mouth as she is firing off a shot-gun at the baddies. Again there is no context at all.

In the next product placement they are all in a closed room watching television. The Asian girl lights up, and no-one dares complain. Imagine if such scenes were made with heroine or crack, with the same attitude. In the next scene, at the school dance of all places, the Asian girl is posing with a cigarette in a typical 'elegant' cool pose.

This is the clearest case of the absence of any context, as smoking would never be tolerated in any school dance in the U.S or Europe. In the climactic scene, pointing her gun at the baddies, our Asian Spy girl has a cigarette in her mouth. It is sickeningly transparent what is going on. I wonder how much the tobacco lobby contributed to the production costs for this film.

Surely laws should be put in place to make such product placements, such advertising, illegal. Also the film credits should be forced to reveal exactly how much money any tobacco related source contributed to the film for such product placements, in the same way as they are required to note any 'considerations' paid by other companies.

A hot psychiatrist in another Hollywood movie asks the others present the typical rhetorical question 'Do you mind if I smoke? Dolph Lundgren responds with 'what you do with your body is your business'. This is the 'spin' that the tobacco lobby is attempting to sell, to counter all the compelling scientific arguments that smoking kills other people, and damages other people's health and wellbeing. So, how much did the tobacco lobby pay for that 'pay for comment'?

During a Bruce Willis film, they are in therapy, and the obsessive compulsive character is asking them to open a window or door, or to get a smoke sucking ash-tray. The association the tobacco lobby want us to make is that only obsessive neurotics have anything against being forced to smoke. All the other characters make fun of him, taking the piss. This is meant to intimidate the audience into ever asserting their rights 'not to smoke'.

The response that the tobacco lobby want to institutionalize, normalize, and naturalize, is to intimidate non-smokers into acquiescence. This is exemplified in on characters response: 'I'm going to smoke, right next to him, go on, tell him'. I wonder how much writers get paid to explicitly work on ways to present the tobacco lobby message, and to influence public opinion in such product placements.

I wonder if Bruce Willis was aware that he was being used as a vehicle for the promotion of such toxic and addictive drugs. Remember the German-English dictionary used the example of a nonsmoker in their definition of 'obsession'. The tobacco lobby, at huge expense, took all measures it could think of to have anyone who resists being forced to consume other people's tobacco products publicly defined within the hegemonic system as loony, obsessed, irrational, and difficult.

During a U.S television series we see a sticker on car which reads 'If my smoking bothers you, then don't breathe'. What are we to make of such sentiment? That someone could produce stickers like that knowing that the sentiment would resonate with enough people to make money from them?

One of the first things that ruined the positive impression Scientology had at first made on me was the fact that while they practice detoxification, they allow smoking. This to me is an admission of failure. They claim to empower people to take total control of their lives and the material universe. However if they cannot even overcome tobacco addiction, then how can they justify all their other claims? How is an 'addict' in control of anything? I wonder if L Ron Hubbard was a smoker?

A history domestic drug use

Over a hundred years ago, opium was promoted by a member of the State Parliament of Victoria, Australia, as an excellent calming tonic for children, and a great way to increase the mental and physical vigor of workers. He was not the only politician to lobby for the availability of 'hard' drugs. At the time, marijuana joints were sold at tobacconists, and marketed as a remedy for asthma and Bronchitis.

Opium was used as an all-purpose remedy, available in over the counter preparations for the treatment of child teething pains, coughs, colds, headache, toothache, 'nervous depression, and fatigue. Coca (the raw material for cocaine), was used to make 'Coca-Cola', and a wine specifically endorsed by the Catholic Pope. Drug control was widely seen as an excessive attack on personal freedom and choice. Amphetamines were widely available up to the mid-1950s.

Popular newspapers campaigned against government moves to control drugs, including heroine. Headlines ran stating 'It is a crime to ban heroine'. Doctors were outraged at the federal government's moves to outlaw heroine.

The moves of the Australian federal government to ban heroine were at the bequest of America. The Menzies government banned the importation of cannabis-marijuana, after alarmist reports from the U.S about this 'Mexican sex drug'. Similar fears were raised about opium. The population were taught to fear that their innocent daughters would be seduced by Asians and Mexicans.

These people, it was claimed, would use the drug to make their daughters lose their self-control, making them overwhelmingly horny, and desperate to have sex with them. In other words, racism (Mexican and Asian) and sexism (girls weren't supposed to want to have sex, and had to be protected from this 'unnatural' desire if they did, as they were weak) had a big impact on the drug control issue. It is interesting to note that Queen Victoria is known to have used marijuana to reduce period pain. Sigmund Freud used cocaine. Many famous artists, including Lewis Carroll (the pen name of the writer of Alice in Wonderland), were opium addicts.

The U.S government has, for many decades now, been experimenting with amphetamines, LSD and other drugs to heighten their soldiers' combat effectiveness. Even recently, 'friendly fire' attacks and bombing raids on civilian refugee convoys in Iraq have been attributed to the U.S air forces coercion of pilots into using speed/amphetamines. They were (are?) not allowed to fly missions unless they agreed (agree?) to take the speed. The speed is meant to heighten their awareness, and allow them to fly long missions over the course of whole weeks without needing to sleep. It has been demonstrated that the speed can make pilots 'paranoid'. They can become prone to interpreting anything as a threat, and therefore a target, and firing on it. Many cases of friendly fire, and collateral damage have been attributed to this forced use of amphetamines. Many civilian and refugee convoys have been mistakenly bombed by pilots 'off their heads' on speed.

The benefits of LSD were praised by students who claimed they could, if they planned their objectives in advance, for example, master a foreign language in 8 hours. This of course was the reason LSD had been developed and experimented with by the U.S military, to seek to give their soldiers an 'edge' on the enemy.

Since drugs have become criminalized, their abuse has reached ever higher levels. No legal enforcement agency has been able to limit the supply or use of 'illegal' drugs. Of course the prisons are full of victims of the drug laws, and the criminal activity surrounding 'illicit' drugs. As in the earlier prohibition of alcohol, the prohibition of illegal drugs has merely produced a whole criminal industry, and a huge number of victims, without having any impact on the illegal drug trade or illegal drug consumption.

Maybe even more alarming is the fact that prescriptions for 'prescription' drugs have soared in the last century. Prescriptions for anti-depressants, for example, have reached around 9 million a year in Australia, which has a total population of around 20 Million. It is notable that the prescriptions for these drugs tripled between 1996 and 2003. A 'culture' of prescription drugs has grown up. It is symptomatic of a tradition of seeking quick fixes for our 'troubles, both on a personal and a societal level.

The benefits of pharmaceuticals, be they illegal or prescription, have always been marketed to consumers. The costs and negative side effects take years to emerge, by which stage it is too late to correct them.

Pharmaceutical companies invest up to 30% of their total budgets in marketing their products. It is a huge business. This is one reason why the medical industry is so loathe to promote holistic remedies and nutrition. They can't make huge profits from wholesome food and behavioral change. You could grow opium and marijuana in your backyard, with little effort or expense. This would deny the multi-national pharmaceutical giants billions of dollars in profits. They want you be dependent on their 'patented' products.

For years the huge pharmaceutical giants even denied poor countries the right to produce generic equivalents of their patented medications for such simple to treat and widespread diseases as malaria and H.I.V Aids. They put profits well above the suffering and death of millions of people who could not afford to buy the company 'branded' products. People who fought to change international law, to allow countries too poor to afford the branded products to manufacture cheap generic versions of the drugs, were harassed, threatened and mobbed by big business vested interests and their hired goons, be they lawyers or thugs. The violence of legal injustice is no less violent than that of the street thug!

The companies hire the best lawyers to fight class action lawsuits arising from the negative side effects of their products, and only pay out when they have no other alternative. They deliberately prolong legal proceedings in the hope that the claimants will die before a judge can award them the damages that they would inevitably be awarded. Their scientists often knew of the potential for devastating side effects and overestimated the positive results in their clinical trials. They destroyed documents to prevent them being used against them in court. They were the 'hired guns' and 'mercenaries' of the huge pharmaceutical companies. They were paid to find what the company wanted them to. They often owned stock in the companies themselves.

Many drugs only have very minor positive impacts, much less than lifestyle changes like more exercise and more healthy diets would have. However the public are taught to expect, and therefore demand, quick, effortless fixes. The public are willing conspirators in their seduction. The drugs also have many known, and conveniently un-researched, negative side effects.

The defining of cholesterol as bad, and the marketing of drugs to lower it, are good examples of how the hugely profitable pharmaceutical industry operates. Research is promoted which has potential to produce a market for pharmaceuticals. Many researchers now claim that cholesterol is of little importance for heart disease. They say that the original research was published much too early, before real studies could be carried out. Whether this represents a direct collusion and conspiracy or merely a coincidence of interests would be hard to say, without any 'insiders' 'coming out' and blowing the whistle. In any case research sponsored by corporations is seen by them as a mere investment, rather than an expression of public interest.

Researchers need to publish something to get promoted, and maintain their status. Corporations need to 'produce' both markets for their products, and potential products to market.

Few people can make huge profits out of lifestyle changes including diet and exercise, and greater intimacy and solidarity. Going for a walk or playing with the kids does not increase the profits of big business. They will market themselves as warm and caring corporations, but they are cynically driven to maximize profits and share prices. They have allowed millions to suffer from easily preventable and treatable diseases such as malaria and dysentery, in seeking to maximize their own profits.

The wealthy and privileged beneficiaries of the pharmaceutical patents would rather allow a small child, in fact millions of 'innocent' children and adults, to die from diarrhea (dysentery), than lose the potential profits that could be made from the relatively few people in the less developed world who might be able to scrape together the money for the branded and patented drugs. Their only valid argument was that generic drugs produced cheaply in the poor countries might make their way back to the U.S or Europe.

The companies were merely protecting the patents which give them a monopoly on producing their products. Luckily international law eventually submitted to compassion, and ruled that countries that could not

afford to pay licensing fees to the patent holders, or buy their patent branded products, would be allowed to produce cheap generic versions of the products. They ruled in favor of compassion and reason.

The WTO, World Trade Organization, recently allowed the poorest nations to ignore patents so that they could produce generic H.I.V treatments. To give you some idea of the costs of patents, the drugs that cost \$200 U.S a year in India, cost consumers in the U.S \$15000. Keep in mind that pharmaceutical companies spend more on marketing than they do on research and development.

Their ruling was of course aggressively opposed and legally challenged by the hugely powerful pharmaceutical corporations. When all their efforts failed, they of course sought to make a public relations 'virtue' out of the necessity the courts had imposed on them. They promoted themselves as caring and warm humanitarian organizations, and sought to gain good public relations material from claiming to be helping the underprivileged by 'allowing' them to make cheap generic copies. They will of course seek to make a virtue out of any externally imposed, and long fought, necessity. That is the final 'spin-doctoring' benefit that the public relations gurus can offer their clients in the face of defeat.

Cases are still being fought in various international forums for many poor countries to gain the right to purchase generic drugs or produce patented drugs themselves. In the meantime millions of people are suffering, completely unnecessarily. For the pharmaceutical countries, a few million dollars is worth a few million lives of totally avoidable suffering. To them it is easily worth a few million deaths. After all, it is, someone else's father, mother, brother, sister, or child that is dying! That is human nature.

Do you claim to behave any better? I'm sure you can 'morally' masturbate and criticize everyone else, but what have you ever done for strangers? 'Moral masturbation' might make you feel good, but it won't help anyone.

Anyway, back to the criminalization of illicit drugs. The 'authorities' argue that they are seeking to minimize or eliminate the 'harm' done by illicit drugs. Of course they will point to homeless teen drug addicts prostituting themselves to pay for heroine. But are they a prostitute and homeless because they are a drug addict? Or are they a prostitute because they are homeless, and became a drug addict to numb the pain of having to sell their body?

As we will discuss later, drug use is a symptom of much more endemic and systemic problems that the 'authorities' don't want to admit to, problems that they are even more incompetent and inept at dealing with than the illicit drug trade. In fact they are problems that they are unwilling to deal with, as in doing so they would threaten and challenge the dominant hegemonic system of relations and definitions.

But back to the point of 'harm minimization'. If that is truly the justification for the criminalization of some drugs, then we must pause for a moment, and consider the ramifications of such logic. If drug use was criminalized to prevent harm, then can't we expect a criminalization of cars? Surely cars kill more people than drugs do. This is an easy fact to demonstrate. Surely if some drugs must be made illegal because some people, like the homeless teen prostitute, can't be trusted not to harm themselves by using them, then the same logic applies, only a hundred times more strongly, to cars. Everyone knows of someone who has had a friend or relative killed or horribly maimed in a car accident. The misery that is a by-product of legal ownership and use of cars is thousands of times greater than that produced by any illicit drug. In fact 1.2 million people die from car 'use' each year. So of course we must discount the arguments of the 'authorities' that they are trying to protect us from ourselves as disingenuous. What then, might their true motives be? Or can we expect the federal courts to criminalize the possession and use of cars in the near future?

And, of course, I won't even start on the misery produced by drugs like tobacco, that the U.S and European governments actually subsidize and promote, let alone alcohol, or prescription drugs. I used the car analogy as it is a good 'reductio ad absurdum', a device for showing what happens when you apply the logic applied in one situation to another, less obvious, but similar, situation.

The U.S and U.K leading the war against drugs? The opium wars

It has been illegal to sell or use opium in china since 1729. In 1796 importing and growing opium poppies was also forbidden. The British trade with China was one-sided. The British had very little that the Chinese wanted, however the Chinese many things that were in great demand in Britain, including silks, spices, and ceramics. The British East Indies company had a royal license and therefore monopoly on trade with China. The company grew opium poppies in Bengal, for the production of opium they sold, illegally, in China. The Chinese insisted their sovereignty be respected, and the British stop pushing drugs in their country. The British refused.

The British government subsidized the drug smugglers, which they considered opium traders. The Chinese confiscated 20,291 chests of opium which they then publicly destroyed. The British were expelled from the continent, and settled on the more or less uninhabited island of Hong Kong. The British, aided by the U.S navy, and the French responded with violence, leading to the Opium wars from 1839 to 1842, and from 1856 to 1860. Ultimately the Chinese sued for peace.

The peace treaty required the Chinese pay millions of pounds in compensation. The French alone looted 300 wagon-loads of furs, silks, gold, and jade from the Peking summer palace. The British and their U.S allies then forced China to legalize the opium trade. Today of course the U.S and Britain force 'sovereign' Asian nations to allow advertising that has been banned in the United States and European Community as part of trade regulations. This advertising was banned as it directly targets teen and pre-teen girls.

Of course many people believe that street drugs were criminalized in the U.S so that unofficial U.S government organizations would have a constant source of revenue for their illegal activities at home and abroad. Today the U.S claim the role of world 'drug police'. They destroy opium crops overseas. The U.S forced Australian governments to ban drugs that had, until these actions, been freely available, and without any apparent damage to public or private interests. So many people will find these historic facts quite surprising.

De-criminalizing drug abuse: Moving the focus to harm minimization

At present illegal drug use is treated as a 'criminal' problem, one for the criminal justice system to deal with. Alcohol and tobacco products produce greater health and social problems but they are not treated as a criminal problem. They are treated as a health problem. The focus has been on educational campaigns, management, and harm minimization. Laws have been introduced concerning the responsible service and consumption of alcohol. Restrictions have been imposed on where tobacco and alcohol products may be consumed.

There is no evidence that more people would become drug addicts if the price of drugs fell. People complain about the high cost of alcohol and tobacco, but it does not reduce their consumption. In other words there is no great correlation between price and addiction. Addicts will simply pay whatever price is demanded, whether for alcohol, or illicit drugs.

The current high prices of illegal drugs resulting from their criminalization are patently not working as a deterrent. Further, there is no evidence that drug addicts will consume more if the price falls. In many cases they are not physically capable of consuming more. If illegal drugs were legalized, the price of street drugs would decrease along with an increase in supply. This would eliminate the need to commit crimes in order to be able to satisfy an illegal drug addiction.

Criminalization has not proven an efficacious deterrent. Prison sentences have not proven an efficacious deterrent. The authorities have never managed to reduce the supply of drugs. Where there is a market demand, it will be met. Further, the high price of drugs, their illegality, and their exclusivity, implicitly make them status goods. This makes them more attractive and interesting to many people. Many people are excited by the risk associated with the criminality of drug use.

Drug abuse is ultimately a symptom of other individual and social problems. Anyone who really wanted to could kick their habit. They are often self-medicating for emotional and social problems. The typical media 'junkie' is not destitute because of their drug use. Their drug use is symptomatic of their other problems. If you take away an illegal drug from them, they will merely abuse legal drugs. The outcomes will be no different. Decriminalizing drugs should also avoid the current problems associated with drugs that are diluted and 'cut' with other dangerous chemicals, to increase the drug-dealers profits.

Pure heroine has fewer and lesser costs than alcohol and tobacco when it is freely available. The main problems I know of is that heroin users can begin to ignore their basic nutritional needs, are often forced to share needles when their supply is limited by legal and health authorities, and engage in unsafe behaviors such as prostitution in order to finance the drugs that are only expensive due to their criminalization.

Some people might experiment and try a few more drugs than they currently do, but that is no reason to anticipate an increase in overall drug abuse. Alcohol is legal. I have tried all sorts of alcoholic poisons. I am not an alcoholic. My peers eventually got me to experiment with marijuana, but I haven't touched the stuff since. It was interesting and fun, but nothing I want to develop as a 'habit'.

Most illegal drug users have the same relationship with illegal drugs. If the market for illegal drugs was limited to junkies and addicts, then the market would be too small to justify the current criminal drug industry. Most users of illegal drugs function as well, if not better, than legal drug consumers. This is the reason they can afford to buy the drugs. They have good, respectable, middle class professions.

There seem to be indications of a genetic pre-disposition to all forms of addiction, including gambling, sex, alcohol, and other drugs. However it is clear that many drug users are either self-medicating for pain or seeking a temporary 'escape' from an unrewarding existence, rather than actively seeking a 'high'.

All indications are that the resources currently directed at the impossible task of eliminating illegal drugs would be more productively employed in harm minimization, drug education, and health programs. Criminalizing some drug use simply produces a criminal industry. It produces criminals.

Our prisons are full of drug-related criminals. Many of these people would not have come to the attention of the legal justice system if not for their illegal drug use. The costs of policing, legal justice administration, and incarceration, are exorbitant. None of these activities produce any value.

The overt intention of current practices, the elimination of illegal drugs, will never be achieved. It is a pure waste of resources. It is probably merely a disingenuous strategy with the ulterior motive of gaining access to greater funding and resourcing for the legal and policing industries.

The war on drugs, like any other 'war' is most likely constructed merely to increase the power and resources we are willing to sacrifice to the police and state to 'protect' us. Those with more genuine motives who seek to criminalize some forms of drug use are naive, ignorant, or ill-informed.

The case for the de-criminalization of illegal drugs seems so clear that it must lead us to ask whether the arguments used to support it are in fact genuine at all. Perhaps the lobby group for criminalization has other motives, rather than the interests of drug users and the general public. What might the true referent of their cost-benefit analyses be?

Cars, like heroine, produce a statistically predictable quantum of misery each year.

When politicians defend the criminalization of heroine, they refer to that misery. However of course the misery produced by our addiction to private transportation is exponentially greater than that produced by heroine. This must give us pause to consider how ingenuous arguments about the criminalization of some drugs are. Of course alcohol and tobacco produce exponentially more misery, harm, and death than all of the criminalized drugs combined. We must ask ourselves why one product is criminalized due to its potential for harm, whilst others are defined as 'acceptable' products, although the harm they produce is greater.

Hospital statistics reveal that between 20 and 40 percent of all hospital emergency room visits, and around 45 percent of all road accident deaths can be attributed to alcohol consumption. The presence of alcohol in a driver's bloodstream produces a 50 percent increase in the odds of being involved in any sort of accident. Of course such statistics have been acknowledged in the form of laws against 'driving under the influence' of alcohol, commonly known as 'drink driving'. We could regulate the 'risks' of other drug consumption in a similar way. On the spot testing for 'restricted substances' is already possible, in the same way as police use 'breathalyzers' to target 'drink driving'.

We should employ our limited resources effectively in targeting the associated risks of illegal drug abuse, rather than wasting them in the ineffective attempt to eliminate illicit drug use.

Hepatitis and H.I.V Aids are spread through the sharing of needles. Impurities added to illegal drugs to cut or dilute them are more toxic than the actual drugs themselves.

The fear of legal prosecution and social stigma, rejection, exclusion and abandonment probably hold many people back from seeking medical care and counseling when they find that their 'habit' is dysfunctional, and out of control.

Let me be clear that I do not approve of the regular abuse of any drug, whether alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, heroine, or prescription drugs. My point is that we should seek to minimize the harm such drug use produces. We should change our society so that we are all emotionally secure. Fulfilling and rewarding human relationships are much more satisfying than any drug. It is our lack of access to such fulfilling, intimate, personal, sexual and social relationships that drives us to seek out ersatz fulfillments.

Anyway we must ask ourselves whether the state should even have the right to compel the individual to dispose of their time 'productively', rather than in merely seeking pleasure in the form of drugs. Do you doubt that the state merely represents the interests of 'the beneficiary classes', through its obscurantist and mystifying arguments in favor of criminalization of some drugs? If every dissatisfied, exploited, miserable worker spent their last money and last weeks of life in drug induced bliss followed by a peaceful, painless death, then who would produce all the value that the beneficiary classes consume?

Hegemonic definitions in relation to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs

The illegal drug user is defined in the popular awareness, the 'public opinion', by the destitute, prostitute, homeless, helpless, out of control, marginalized, loser. They have lost everything, including their pride and self-respect, to their addiction. It is ironic and significant that the user of the legal drugs, alcohol and tobacco, is defined in the media, and therefore in the popular consciousness, as successful, in control, sexy, and enjoying a satisfying and rewarding 'lifestyle'.

The parallel existence of these definitions is problematic. Interrogation of the situation must yield significant insights into social defining processes, and social psychology.

That the average drug user is middle class, has a good job, a nice house and family, and that the average alcohol and tobacco abuser is poorly educated, unemployed or on a subsistence income, has dysfunctional relationships with their family, and is generally a failure in the scheme of things, is more than merely ironic. The contradictions between popular consciousness, therefore 'social reality', and the scientific or primary reality, begs us to interrogate the situation and to comprehend what it reveals about the ability of hegemonic definitions, of 'social reality', to defy reality.

Hegemonic interests wish to push responsibility for the plight of the 'fallen' onto illegal drugs, and hence deny their own responsibility, and therefore accountability. In fact the drug addict's addiction is not the source of their other problems, rather, it is their other problems which lead them to addiction. Addiction is the symptom, not the problem.

It is much more convenient for the accountable governments to absolve themselves of responsibility by claiming that illegal drugs, rather than deep systemic issues, are the source of the problems. This deflects interrogation away from the real problems, and onto a scapegoat, the drug dealers.

Drug addiction is in reality a symptom of social problems that we as a society are responsible for. Drug use is a symptom of stress, alienation, rejection, abandonment, loss of faith, hope, goodwill, self-esteem, self-belief, and a general loss of belonging. It is an attempt to self-medicate for depression and for pain relief. It is often an act of self-destruction. Self-destruction and numbing can be more addictive than highs and rushes.

Those who become addicted through mere recreational use usually have access to the resources required for effective detoxification and rehabilitation.

The definition 'drug dealer' itself is also worthy of illumination. The heads of tobacco, alcohol, and pharmaceutical companies are all applauded as successful business people. Those selling 'illegal' drugs are defined as evil criminals. However statistics compel us to define legal drugs as the far greater evil, based on the problems they generate. This state of affairs, this situation, highlights how social reality is constructed, and how it has more 'social' reality for the popular consciousness than the primary reality.

The public consumes the social reality given to them willingly, as it fits in with their general 'world views', which they have been hegemonically spoon-fed since birth, over generations. The social reality is teleologically and reflexively consistent. One myth reinforces the other. One lie supports the other lies. Within the teleological loop everything is reflexively consistent. There is nothing to suggest that anything might be other than it appears to be. The shiny smooth surfaces deflect interrogation.

It is only when we interrogate rigorously that we find slight faults in the apparently perfect surface. It is only after we have escaped the loop, through some tiny crack, that we can begin seeing the whole. Only then are we in a position to holistically interrogate this whole.

That many illegal drugs were legal for thousands of years, and up till recently defined as consumer goods, must lead us to interrogate the whole situation. During the Vietnam War the U.S government got the Australian government to ban most of the drugs that had, up until this point, been readily available as ingredients in many over the counter consumer goods and prescription-free pharmaceuticals.

The 'contra' scandal in the U.S revealed that the U.S government engages in secret activities financed by criminal activity, and without any public accountability. Income from the domestic U.S and overseas drug trade would provide a massive stream of income for the financing of such covert operations. This income is dependent on maintaining a monopoly on the drugs trade, on eliminating all competition. The best way to attain this monopoly was to criminalize the drug trade. Keep in mind that the U.S has a history of arming, training, and providing intelligence to terrorist organizations fighting to overthrow democratically elected governments.

The U.S and European Union governments sponsor and subsidize the U.S and European tobacco industries. Further, the U.S government prevents its trading partners in developing countries from restricting advertising of U.S tobacco products. They are effectively coerced into condoning advertising targeted at young females, such as the infamous Joe Camel campaign. Tobacco products are legal, deadly, toxic drugs.

There is a current consensus in the medical community that tobacco products produce a multitude of cancers, and other chronic and debilitating illnesses. Today in Italy the health authorities are warning that in Italy alone, discarded cigarette butts contain 324 tons of highly toxic waste including nicotine, ammonia, and plutonium 210, which is more toxic than cyanide gas.

The costs to the community in terms of suffering and medical expenses is hard to measure, however most commentators agree that Tobacco and Alcohol, among all drugs, produce the highest burdens and costs on our society. The health and social costs of illegal drugs such as heroine are minimal in comparison. In Germany alone, 70,000 people die each year from alcohol abuse.

The New England Journal of Medicine 1994, vol.330/13, attributed 19% of all deaths in the United States in 1990 to tobacco product consumption. In this same year only 1% of all deaths could be attributed to illegal drug consumption.

In this sense, the Colombian government has a greater moral right to attack Tobacco and Alcohol producers in the U.S, then the U.S government has to attack Colombian drug cartels. Apparently the U.S government has spent around 3.3 Billion dollars aerial spraying coca plantations with herbicides, and poisoning people in the process. Remember that at the same time the U.S and European Community subsidize the production of tobacco products to the tune of billions of dollars, and force Asian nations to allow advertising that has been banned in the West.

It is a sobering thought that alcohol is reported to account for 20-40% of all hospital emergency patients, and 45% of all road accident mortalities. The presence of alcohol in a driver's blood is correlated with a 50% increase in the likelihood of them being involved in any sort of accident. I wonder what the price of alcohol would have to be increased to cover the real costs it imposes on society.

A 300-400mg blood alcohol level can result in death. This could be the equivalent of 400 ml of scotch. Social research has shown that 'binge drinking' has become disturbingly popular among young people. The aim of the 'binge' drinker is to consume as great an amount of alcohol as possible over a nights drinking. This often results in acts of aggression, violence, rape, and the ultimate hospitalization of the drinker themselves.

Alcohol and tobacco products have, for brief periods, been proscribed by governments, even criminalized. In the U.S alcohol prohibition lasted a brief period, during which organized crime made a fortune, and the government lost a fortune in taxes. Tobacco was prohibited in Japan in 1609 but smuggling continued and made the ban ineffective. Thankfully tobacco products are becoming less and less socially acceptable. Tobacco consumption is becoming restricted to the private sphere, in most advanced western societies. Most developed countries have laws against smoking in public buildings, and more and more 'public' spaces.

The U.S is being forced, by declines in U.S sales, and the decreasing social acceptance of its products there, into exporting its tobacco consumption to the developing world.

Sadly, it seems that the German political parties are still too willing to prostitute themselves to the tobacco lobby, and to pander to tobacco addicts. There is a growing movement in Germany, however, against forced tobacco consumption, what is, what is euphemistically referred to in the popular language culture as 'passive' smoking.

You killed your best friend, how do you feel?

At some point smokers will be faced with fact that they killed their colleagues, friends, and family members with their second-hand smoke. Most smokers themselves will not get cancer but many of those who had no choice but breathe their smoke will, due to the impact of genetic factors in illness and disease. Public smokers are the equivalent of drink-drivers. They place other people's lives, health, and well-being at risk by exercising their own 'right' to consume toxic substances. Recreational users of illegal drugs who consume their drugs in private, and never jeopardize the health of others by driving and so on, are 'morally' superior to public smokers and drinkers. As a society we should recognize this. We should decriminalize all drugs, while coming down hard on anyone who consumes any drug in a way that threatens the well-being of others.

It is also possible to see the fact that smokers continued to poison their loved-ones, theirs and other people's children, their own colleagues, work-mates, friends, and complete strangers in the context of an instinctual impulse to aggressive destructiveness. Forcing others to endure their tobacco smoke could be seen as an unconscious form of violence, an unconscious desire to hurt, irritate, and frustrate others. The desire was repressed so the smokers would deny this motive. For them they were simply expressing their 'rights' to satisfy their addiction anywhere they desired.

Pandering to the 'war on drugs'

Criminals and their legal counsel pander to the social realities surrounding drugs. Judges and probation boards are likely to be lenient on criminals who blame drugs for their behaviors. This supports the systems definitions of drugs as the source of all our social woes, and takes pressure off them to change the system of relations, to accept the wider problems of society, and take response-ability for them. When a criminal blames drugs, they all breathe a sigh of relief. Society is fine. The system is fine. All they need to do is eliminate drugs and everything will be just fine and dandy. So criminals pander to their wants, and are rewarded with lenient sentences and early release. In fact studies done in Australia revealed that criminals would still commit the same crimes as they had, however they would simply spend the proceeds of their crimes on different things, rather than drugs.

The same situation exists everywhere. Reinforce the hegemonic definitions of reality, and you will be rewarded. Challenge them, and you will be threatened with 'fates worse than death'. And do not for a moment imagine that your friendly Christian-Muslim-Buddhist-Hindu neighbor will for one moment hesitate to take advantage of such an opportunity to express their instinct for aggressive destruction. People do not judge and punish others out of a sense of justice. They merely use this as an excuse to attack, victimize, abuse, humiliate, harm, and torture others.

TROONATNOOR ON LOVE AND SEX

Love and Sexuality

Philosophy is about having the best possible experience of life available to us, and so philosophy must inevitably deal with love and sexuality. Definitions concerning love and sex are reflexive of, every other definition and system of relations in a society.

Socrates is quoted as saying that love and marriage are grand, if expensive. Of course when asked if it was preferable to marry or live alone, he quipped that either way you will be miserable. Remember he married, had several children, including one in his late 60 s.

Authenticity, whole-i-ness, self-acceptance, and security

Jesus and Buddha and Krishna could love. They could be inclusive of everyone. They had no need to reject anyone, because they loved themselves, they were whole, and therefore holy. What I mean is that they did not have to reject any part of themselves or disapprove of themselves. They accepted their complete selves, and loved themselves, all of themselves. They did not fracture themselves into parts that they liked, and parts that they felt they had to hide, in order to be accepted and approved of by others, and by themselves.

People are taught that some of the things they naturally desire and even think are bad. They are taught to disapprove of their own innate natures. Of course the church has turned every harmless act and thought of sexual expression into sin. Even those who have no contact with the church still feel that they 'ought not to' have particular fantasies, desires, or thoughts. It is in the realm of sexuality that most of these occur.

But of course people feel guilty about lots of things. They feel they 'should' feel guilty, because they 'shouldn't' want or think or feel them. People are directly taught to be inauthentic, to deny parts of their true natures. They are 'taught' indirectly in other ways to disapprove of their innate natures. They feel they ought not to hate some of the people that they do, like their own family!. They ought to be more patient or caring or generous with people they don't like. They ought *not* want to have sex with that person, or even their partner 'that way'.

Some feel guilty about not living up to their parent's expectations, 'after all that they have done for them'. For many different reasons people sanction themselves, disapprove of themselves, and deny parts of their true natures, sort of partitioning themselves into the parts they approve of and the ones they don't. The person is then no longer whole. They need to be healed.

The power of disapproval is good, where it encourages people to behave in positive ways that empower them and make them whole. However most of the things people disapprove of, and are ashamed of, and which keep them from approving of themselves and accepting themselves, and therefore being whole, are merely arbitrary. Some of these 'shoulds' have been deliberately constructed and taught, for example by the church, or by the capitalist media, or the nationalist military-government, to serve narrow vested interests, to gain privileges and powers for a select few.

Masturbation and sexual fantasy are a win win for everyone, except the King or Capitalist big business and church who need more taxpayers, consumers, slaves, and contributors, through reproduction and growing populations. Capitalism doesn't need authentic people who feel secure in themselves, it needs insecure consumers who will buy products in an attempt to gain that elusive feeling of security, which the media are employed to make unattainable, by continually raising the bar, and constructing fashions and trends. Marketing is the technology of producing insecurity. As we have seen, that is the church's role too, and ironically enough, the true role of the military. People who are secure don't need protection. No-one who is secure and at peace bothers to harass anyone else. The military exist to promote the insecurity that justifies their access to resources, privileges and power.

Only when we are 'allowed' to accept and approve of ourselves, will we have secured the peace of mind that lets us accept others how they are, to approve of and accept them. When we are secure, we have no need for external securities of any kind, the ones that represent threats to other people's security.

Boasting, overachieving, and demanding all the approval, makes others feel inadequate or unrecognized. Huge armed forces make other nations feel vulnerable and in need of more defenses. We won't need a military when we perceive no threat, when we trust each other. We don't need personal defenses either. Only when we lower our defenses can we share, be vulnerable, develop intimacy, develop trust, and feel secure. Rejecting ourselves: partitions and 'acting out'

A lot of neurotic behavior results from partitioning the self into the parts that can be confidently shared, and those that need to be hidden, even from ourselves. When people deny a part of their nature, a desire, a thought, a memory or experience, or a realization, they make themselves at some level not-conscious of it, or at least pretend so. But nature will take its course, and the person will end up 'acting out' the desire or whatever it was they feel they

can't incorporate into their 'whole' being. This is the organism's way of trying to heal itself, to make itself whole. It will seek to create situations in which it can find some way to incorporate the fragmented part back into the whole, to work on it, to reconcile it with the whole.

People who can't reconcile their natures with what they believe they 'ought' to be may develop what we call schizophrenia. In extreme cases they will develop apparent dual personalities, where the disapproved of aspect of themselves gets acted out as if by a separate person. The need to deny those parts of the self force the self to construct them as a separate entity that does not belong to them.

Constructed fundamental insecurity, and Paul's Cult of Christianity

Children have often been taught to be ashamed of their own basic body functions. This means they have been taught to disapprove of themselves and their very natures at the most basic, fundamental level. Add to this shame about very fundamental and natural sexual desires, and we can easily begin to become aware of the very early fragmentation and denial of 'wholiness', a fundamental form of violence, that is perpetrated on them.

The priests can then market their own artificial forms of 'wholiness', at great personal profit. The costs are huge, and conceived by the victims, and the society in general. It is often the priests themselves who have been denied a true wholiness. They are then motivated to define the 'holiness' offered to them as real. It is zealots like Paul, who, denied true self-approval, acceptance, 'integrity, and whole-ness', became dependent on the ersatz, replacement 'holiness' his own religious dogma offered.

Had Paul been able to love himself, and approve of himself, he would not have needed the external hope and approval and love that he pursued through his construction of a religion with which he could save himself. If he had recognized that he was already whole, he would not have needed to invent a new cult of guilt and forgiveness.

Getting in touch with our true selves

We have been trained to define our true, physical selves, in negative ways. We are taught to reject our innocent desires and pleasures, and to define them as sin. We are socialized into rejecting our true selves. We learn that we should be guilty of our true natures. We are programmed to see our natural desires as something to be overcome. Our innocent lusts are defined as barriers to attaining spiritual enlightenment. The hegemonic popular culture, full of its reflexive definitions and ways of being and seeing, has defined life as instrumental, as a means, rather than an end in itself. This invalidates and sometimes even demonizes the desire for optimizing and realizing our opportunities and potentials for positive life experience.

We must first begin by regaining a full awareness of our own bodies. We must learn to become more aware of our breathing, posture, muscle tension, and heart rate. We must bring our consciousness back to where it belongs, in our bodies. Often we are so engaged in the external world that we lose touch with our internal worlds. This results in poor body posture and back and joint problems, high blood pressure, headaches and migraines, muscular cramps and aches and pains, and even accidents. Meditation, sport, and dance are good ways of getting to know yourself, to develop balance, posture, and ease.

Much has been written regarding meditation. I believe the core idea is to focus on the 'space' between thoughts-feelings, simply 'being', making no effort, but being alertly open to experiencing reality directly. Zen practitioners meditate sitting, walking, and doing their daily chores. Once you 'empty' yourself and cease defining things, you make it easier for reality to 'speak' to you, to define itself, to reveal its, and therefore your, true nature.

An important element of regaining our selves is the re-discovery of our sensuality. We have been trained to deny and sublimate our sensuality, and innocent sexuality. Such resistance to sexuality is unnatural, and represents a burden and stress on the body. Sensuality and sexuality are a form of expression and creativity, a source of positive energy. This is why masturbation and fantasy need to be defined as innocent and healthy. This is why we need to learn to move in sensual ways, to dance. We need to touch and be touched, to caress and be caressed. Such behaviors need to be promoted and naturalized. This need highlights how far the Hegemonic popular culture has damaged us; that we need to naturalize and normalize the most natural and normal of all imaginable behaviors.

We need to recognize that our potential for positive experience and development lies in the physical and technical realms, and not in some super-natural or mystical realm. Our spirituality is as physical as our lust. The true spirit of life is to experience. We will only manage to optimize our potential for positive life experience when we recognize the nature of reality, and the reality of our natures.

Returning the innocence to sexuality

We often define innocence as a state devoid of sexuality. In fact sexuality, in itself, is the most innocent of all human drives. It is the desire to give and receive pleasure. What could be more innocent? There is no sexual desire or activity that is not in and of itself innocent. Only when the promise of or engagement in a sexual activity is used instrumentally to gain some objective external to mutual sexual pleasure, does sexuality lose its innocence. In this sense a virgin can have fully lost their innocence in that they use the promise of sexual pleasure to gain some a-sexual objective, such as influence, money, or power. In this sense, a person who engages in regular sexual activity can have retained their innocence.

The most powerful sexual arousal is the feeling or anticipation of mutual and reciprocated arousal. We are sexually stimulated by the apparent arousal of our lovers as indicated by various visual, olfactory, and tactile cues. We see lust in our partner's eyes. Nipples, and clitorises, like penises become engorged and erect. A small amount of lubricant appears on the head of the penis when it is extremely aroused. Vaginas become wet, and internal erectile tissue expands and opens the entrance to the vagina. We hear lust in our lover's voice. The smell of our lover's body arouses us. These visual, audio, and olfactory cues all excite us, building our arousal. Just before orgasm the head of the clitoris retreats back behind its hood, and the surrounding clitoral tissue, which extends up the inner walls of the vagina, reaches its peak of excitement. The male ejaculates, with or without orgasm, from a combination of visual, olfactory, audio, and tactile stimulation.

Sexuality plays out in our mind. We can orgasm in our sleep without any sexual contact. Telephone sex, erotic and pornographic literature, images, and videos, all arouse us by producing exciting sexual ideas. Scopophilia refers to receiving sexual pleasure from watching. Do you like to watch? The most effective erotica is that in which the portrayed persons are authentically enjoying what they are doing. Erotica in which the actors behave mechanically and without any real lust or genuine desire, is not arousing; it is not erotic. Pornography often loses its power to arouse viewers when they realize that the participants are merely acting, and are not experiencing genuine lust, desire, or pleasure. Many women fake orgasms and sexual arousal as they understand intuitively, from experience, or from the advice of others, that at least appearing to be turned on is the best turn on for their partners; the best way to arouse their sexual interest, and to give them pleasure.

One problem with sex, is that it arouses jealousy and envy in those who aren't able to engage in sex with the partners of their desire, or even to enjoy authentic, that is, innocent, sex. This is sex for the sake of sex, the pure satisfaction of sexual lusts. The greatest problem, however, from our philosophical standpoint, is that most of us have been so damaged by the hegemonic definitions and systems of relationships surrounding love and sex, that we are unable to experience such innocent, authentic, hot, hungry, sexual interactions. We cannot 'fuck'. Fucking is the most innocent form of sexual interaction.

A consideration of the noetic environment in which we find ourselves, including the definitions and practices surrounding religion, love, relationships, and the family, will help reveal why this is the case, and how we can return the innocence to sexuality.

The search for meaning and significance often drives us to invest our experiences with significance above their intrinsic meaning. We find someone attractive. We long to kiss them, to taste their warm breath, to caress their soft silky skin, to feel their warmth as we hold them in our arms, to be with them, to make them happy, to protect them, to give them pleasure, warmth, affection, and to lose ourselves in their sexuality. We find ourselves attracted to qualities they possess. This is all purely innocent. The person arouses positive and rewarding emotions in us. If we are lucky, this person feels the same way about us. If we are even luckier, they will act on their feelings, and enter into a rewarding relationship with us.

If we are really lucky we will never have to suffer parting from them. We will never have to suffer the pain resulting from being taken away from such a potent source of positive life experience. We won't have to suffer 'withdrawal symptoms'. However scientific studies indicate that love and infatuation only last between 6 and 36

months. Being drawn to someone based on what they are is a healthy thing. However often the things we find most attractive about someone are qualities we have projected onto them. We are often 'in love' with an idea of them, of what they are, or what we expect them to become.

The fall

Animals are more capable of living in the moment. They can fuck, literally, like an animal. They can act without agonizing over the consequences. They can act on every impulse. They can satisfy their wills as far as their power allows. Freud's super-ego is the biblical apple eating of the apple. Since then we have been unable to live in our own skin. We have become too critical of our own biological drives. However most of this inhibition is not necessary in the interests of society. It has merely been forced upon us by the hegemonic beneficiary classes, in the interests of producing a reproduction of that particular type of society that suits the interests of a minority, at the expense of the majority.

Freud was all for much greater sexual freedom. Our 'family values' have been forced upon the majority in the interests of the minority beneficiary classes. They have sought to eliminate all forms of sexual expression which did not increase the population of value producers, and did not guarantee that this population reproduced itself, and supported itself, at no cost to the beneficiaries. This is why masturbation, anal sex, oral sex, and automatically homo-same-sex relations, were all defined as sin.

Even today same-sex marriage is not recognized by most states. The facts of the situation are highlighted when a Thomas Aquinas can state that it is less of a sin to rape a girl than to masturbate. The family and monogamy has been institutionalized and naturalized. However it is far from optimal for most people. Divorce statistics illustrate this. But it is still a win for the beneficiary classes, which institute laws that force men to pay for the maintenance of children they may never get to spend time with.

Laws against euthanasia, same-sex marriage, and earlier pornography, prostitution, anal and oral sex, and sex-out-of-marriage, are all reflexive of the interests of the beneficiary classes. We do not need to inhibit our natural sexual drives anywhere nearly as much as social norms would lead us to believe.

Authentic lust is 'good'

Clear moist eyes, clear elastic skin, a full mouth of pearly straight teeth, long lean muscular limbs, an upright posture, and symmetry, are all indicators of good health and vitality. Symmetry in particular is a good indicator of the absence of previous infections. Scars, uneven body tissues, and asymmetrical features, are a good indicator of previous infections. Balance aids movement and co-ordination. A lot of scientific research has come to the conclusion that genuine beauty has a real value, and compels us to recognize its objective value. We are not talking about a social construct, we are talking about a biological advantage.

The science of course validates what we have often been too embarrassed or 'politically correct' to publicly state. Beauty is of real value. Of course privately we value beauty. We want to be beautiful. We want beautiful mates. We prefer the company of beautiful people, even if they are threatening to our own sense of self-worth.

Of course people with low self-esteem will chose friends they feel are inferior to themselves, and there is often a 'synergy' between the attractive girl and her 'dumpy' best friend. This friend will never pose a 'threat' to the attractive girls self-esteem, and the 'dumpy' girl won't feel threatened by the attractive friend as they never could be 'competitors' per se.

You might ask yourself then, why it is that much of our culture proscribes us from valuing one person more than another, based on what we are taught to see as 'superficial' qualities. In any case, we can now recognize that beauty is not a superficial quality, and trust our instincts, our hormones, our desires, and our lusts.

Of course those who aren't beautiful will feel threatened by this. No-one is suggesting we value people only based on their inherited beauty. What the society should do, however, is ensure that all of the not-yet-conceived people be allowed to inherit this property, and enjoy the health and value, the functional adaptability, it represents.

We have been taught that lust is bad, and not to trust it. In fact lust seems to have proved itself a good judge, providing good counsel. There is another reason why lean women are more arousing than overweight ones to the majority of men. Some defensive women would like to revise reality, and claim that this preference is merely a result of cultural conditioning, more or less blaming the media. However a lean female is less likely to be pregnant already, and hence leanness is a rough signal to men that they can plant their seed there, and won't be 'wasting' it.

The same applies to youth, and why innocence can be so arousing. A younger female, lean and fresh and vibrant, is less likely to be pregnant. The beauty of youth also signals health and vitality. The age at which females became sexually active has varied greatly in human history. In many cultures a female was considered ready for marriage as soon as she began menstruating. She was then considered a woman.

Luckily for females in the western developed world, they can pretty much decide for themselves when they are ready. Of course some of them have been so warped by religion, and fear sexual intimacy so much, that they seek to define their fear as a virtue, and delay the feared day of sexual initiation until after marriage. Of course there are also other more positive reasons for this behavior. Sadly, some females fear sex so much that they become nuns, and make a 'virtue' of their fear.

Of course some females, and males, begin having sex earlier than is right for them, for reasons other than authentic lust. This is of course very unfortunate. It represents an abuse of sexuality, a loss of true innocence, and a loss of authenticity.

Women take advantage of men when they are young, abusing the males sexual attraction to them to get them to give them things and do what they want. They are happy to take advantage of this situation, even if they will simply claim that it is the natural way of the world for the man to pay for the female's company and sexuality. They may deny they are taking advantage of men, but they are, consciously or non-consciously. The behavior is so common that they will just accept it as a natural perk of being female. Of course they become sexually attractive and sexually powerful much younger than men.

They also cease being sexually attractive and powerful earlier. Most are happy to quietly take advantage of the former, however they will loudly complain about the latter. They enjoy the benefits but won't accept the

disadvantages. They will belittle men for finding younger women sexier. The irony is that women often don't manage to free their own authentic sexuality until they are older. When they were younger they treated men like criminals for wanting to have sex with them. They felt they were doing the man a favor, one for which he should rightly pay one way or another. When they get older they complain that men don't want to have sex with them.

Every way of defining and relating has its own benefits and costs. When all decisions are informed by transparency and moral reasoning, the optimal response to our existence can be found, one that has the best outcomes for everyone across the board, at every level of composition.

Every generation thinks it is more sexually liberated than the previous

Every year when there are no other stories to produce, a story about how our teens are becoming sexually active at a younger age are produced. They will always find some young girl who will claim that 'I know of one 14 year old girl 'and so on. In every generation there were always a percentage of young girls and teens who had sex and got pregnant. Everyone knew of someone in their school having sex and getting pregnant.

Every generation of kids talk up big, as if they are all having heaps of sex. They think they are more sophisticated and sexually liberated than their boring parents. It would be interesting to discover how many in fact are. More illustrative would be research into how many actually experience genuine sexual pleasure, let alone orgasm. Many teen girls engage in sex to shock their parents, get their attention, or simply punish them. Others have sex to become popular. Many have sex to gain affection. It is sad. It is sadder still that nothing changes for many people when they get older.

Optimalizing sexuality: empowerment, education, contraception, and harm minimization

Frank and positive sexual education must take place. It must validate sexual desires and behaviors in children as normal and innocent and positive, while educating children about the responsibilities and consequences of sexual behavior, such as unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and the emotional impacts. The evidence that even infants are sexual beings incontrovertible.

Alternatives to penile-vaginal penetrative sex need to be explained and promoted, as safer forms of sexual gratification. These would include personal masturbation, mutual manual (hand) masturbation, and forms of erotic stimulation that carry lower risks of body fluid transmission. There needs to be a frank recognition that sex isn't always good, that it can be bad, or simply mediocre. At present children are only exposed to the glorified sex presented in the media, in pulp fiction, and pornography. They should be taught that sex should not be part of transactions, that no-one will care about you simply because you engage in sex with them. They should be taught to express their authentic sexual desires, and not to abuse sex as an instrument or transaction to get something else.

Children need to be educated about pedophilia, the fact that some adults will want to touch them and engage in sexual interactions with them. They would then be empowered to say no, and to report unwanted repeated advances or actual interactions.

Children should be empowered to express their sexuality. They should learn that no means no. They should be empowered to stop any interaction at the point at which it becomes uncomfortable, and to respect the other's wishes when this happens. They should be taught to respect each other's rights to control their own bodies, to decide who touches them, where, how, and when.

Laws regarding under-age sex, or sex with minors, were introduced in attempts to eliminate child sexual exploitation and prostitution. As a result some totally harmless and welcome sexual encounters became criminalized, as statutory rape. It is a fact that females mature faster than males. Individuals often mature at a different rate to their peers of the same chronological age, their age cohorts. Some 13 year old girls are physically mature and fully capable and keen to experience and initiate sex, often with the older males that they find attractive, and who are able to provide them with the material benefits that women seek in mates. An inflexible system would make criminals of participants in acts where there was no victim.

The 'dangers' of under-age sex are little different to those of adult sex. Some people will lie to their partners to get what they want. They will pretend to be interested in someone's emotional needs and security, whilst merely seeking to seduce them to gain sexual gratification. They will 'dump' them once they have gotten what they want. It is no different, or any more or less ethical, to 'use' a 15 year old than it is to 'use' a 35 year old. That is merely ageism.

The notion of 'sexual predation' is interesting. When women get older they will complain that men are not interested. It is more a question of jealousy, it seems, than interest in the welfare of others. No-one should 'use' anyone. We should also not be naive to focus on the 15 year old as the likely victim. 15 year olds can manipulate older men to satisfy their own sexual needs as much as the more anticipated reverse. 15 year olds are just as likely to manipulate older males to get material benefits, and sexual satisfaction, as they are when they are 35.

The goal is to empower people to enjoy their own sexuality, and to say no to unwanted sexual or physical advances. No-one should betray anyone's trust. Voluntary, welcome sexual interactions should never be criminalized where there is no victim. No-one should deceive another to satisfy their sexual or material needs, that is, to 'use' them as a mere means to their own ends. Individuals should be empowered to set their own boundaries.

This is of course very tricky and treacherous terrain. Lots of dogma, narrow-mindedness, ignorance and denial litter this terrain. The point is that children are sexual beings. They masturbate in various ways. They experience intense sexual pleasure the few adults ever experience.

No-one should have to experience unwanted touching. No-one should feel guilty about their sexuality. Questions about child porn and so on are very delicate. There are 15 year olds who would enjoy participating in sexual activity. Others are abused and forced to participate. No-one should be victimized for perfectly innocent, mutually sought and gratifying sexual interactions to which they have given their informed consent. However it goes without saying that no-one should be victimized by any unwanted sexual predation, interaction, or abuse. The practice in some cultures of forcing 12 year old girls into arranged marriages is abhorrent. Forcing anyone into prostitution, no matter what their age or the circumstances, is also an appalling act of violence.

It is debatable at what stage human sexual attraction should be defined as normal or healthy. A 15 year old girl is quite capable of wanting and actively participating in sexual encounters. Perhaps some 13 year old girls are too. Some 35 year olds aren't. Of course no-one should be forced into sexual encounters by any means, at any age. What we are considering is whether harm is being done by ageist discrimination, and the denial of child and teen sexuality. Of course sexual abuse of anyone is abhorrent. People, no matter what their age, should be encouraged to enjoy their own sexuality, and feel no guilt about sharing it with whoever they chose, so long as the feeling is mutual, and informed consent is able to be, and is in fact, given.

Talk about the difference between physical maturity and emotional maturity is also ageist and generalist. Some people are mature at 15, and some never mature. The individual themselves, armed with a frank and positive education about the positives and negatives of sexual interactions, are the only ones who can determine when they are ready.

You can get hurt by sex no matter what your age. Education and promotion of contraceptives and protection from STD s, through safer sex, including condoms, and limiting the interaction to mutual manual masturbation and so on, will help prevent the physical negatives. Are there laws requiring people to inform potential sex partners of any Sexually transmitted diseases? We must be clear that there is no safe sex as such. There is only safer sex. Anytime anyone engages in an intimate interaction they are vulnerable to emotional hurt. Anytime body fluids can be exchanged, such as the breaking of condoms, there is a risk of the transmission of Sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancy.

Children and adults with creative outlets and pursuits, ambitions, and good relationships with their families, who experience an abundance of affection, understanding, intimacy, trust, security and validation, are more likely to wait until they are in stable relationships before they engage in sex. Where the opposite is the case, people are likely to engage in sex at a much younger age, and engage in more casual sexual encounters throughout their lives. For some people sex is the only potential for positive life experience that they have, and sadly, the only means they feel they have of gaining access to affection and emotional support, intimacy, acceptance, approval, and security.

It is worth noting that up until relatively recently, that is, in the last half century, masturbation was defined by the medical community as being harmful, and even the 'cause' of many illnesses, including insanity. The dominant hegemonic interests found many ways to control people's sexuality and direct it towards producing value for them. The church and medical professions were just two of the institutions, which along with the 'family' and 'romantic love', ensured a steady supply of value producers. If the fear of hell wasn't enough to scare you, or 'going blind', then the fear of insanity probably would. You'd only have one means of expressing your sexuality, and that would be through the penile-vaginal sex that produces value producers, more labor, by producing more children.

Consensual sex and statutory rape

It is implicit in the term 'age of consent' that the issue people have with underage sex is that of consent. This would make the issue one of informing all people about the risks of sex, so that they could give their informed consent. There is nothing intrinsically different about consent for a teenager than for an adult. Adults deceive each other just as much as adults might deceive teenagers, or teenagers might deceive each other.

Surely then the issue is one of requiring all participants in sexual relationships to be honest with each other, and to provide each other with any information that would be salient to the decision to participate in sexual interactions. Withholding salient information is just as wrong as actively deceiving. Everyone needs to be educated about the illusions, myths, unrealistic expectations, and typical 'life-cycles' of sexual and romantic relationships. No more or less harm is done when deceiving an adult as when deceiving a teenager.

Laws in many places label any 'adult' who has sex with a 'minor' as a sexual offender, even where that minor had and gave informed consent to the acts. Often they are the active ones in initiating such relationships. Surely where no harm was done, and no-one did anything they did not want to do, then no crime could be said to have taken place. The real motives for such laws is questionable. Of course some minors will use such laws to 'avenge' themselves when they do not get what they wanted from the relationships.

It is not only adult females that have implicit and unreasonable expectations that engaging in sex will ensure their partner becomes their slave for as long as they desire them. The same issues arise with incest. If the taboo against incest between consenting partners is about genetic problems, then the same interest is relevant to all relationships. If we have reason to prevent people mating on the basis of genetic faults, then surely all people should be screened for genetic compatibility in terms of recessive genes common to both parties. Two unrelated individuals can share the same recessive genes for illnesses as easily as two related persons.

All love is conditional

If unconditional love existed it would mean that we were capable of loving anyone. This is the definition of un-conditional. The absence of any conditions. Thus we would be able to authentically love the person torturing us, rejecting us, abandoning us, harming us, exploiting us, ridiculing and humiliating us. If the love you have for your children or lover is in fact un-conditional, then you will be able to transfer it to any other subject or object.

However what we see is that we are merely playing word-games when we talk of un-conditional love. The love we have for things is conditional on them ultimately providing pleasure, and helping us avoid pain. All our desires are reducible to the desire to experience pleasure and to avoid pain. Nietzsche's 'Will to Power' reduces to simple 'desire'.

We only find power satisfying and motivating as it is a means to the ends of satisfying our desires. It allows us to satisfy our desires and to feel secure from all threats. Everything we feel is conditional. All our emotions are 100% determined and conditional. We love and hope for that which we associate with pleasure. We hate or fear that which we associate with displeasure or pain. All you need do to verify this is to follow your emotions backwards, until they reach the object of desire or aversion.

Of course if you desire to live in denial of such facts, you will find ways to deny and repress reality. However it is a fact that you love your 'loved ones' conditionally. Once you eliminate those conditions, the love you feel for them evaporates. It is conditional, for instance, upon them being your loved ones, your family, your children, your parents, your friends, your colleagues.

If any emotion was unconditional, then you would be free to will, to decide, what things you loved, and what things you loathed. You would be free to determine which things would produce authentic pleasure in you, and which would produce pain and displeasure.

Paying attention

When we give someone attention, pay them a compliment, give them our acceptance and approval, and make them feel good about themselves, we boost their relative energy and power, their confidence and self-esteem. When they do not reciprocate, we are left with a relative deficit of energy. Often hostility and anger therefore replace acceptance and approval, even love, when it is not reciprocated.

We love others mostly as means to our own ends

We love and want to incorporate into ourselves things that bring us pleasure. We hate, and want no contact with, things that bring us pain. We don't love or hate the thing in itself. We merely love and hate the pleasure and pain. We can come to hate people for withholding things from us that we anticipate would bring us pleasure. Thus we can come to hate a person we love, for rejecting us. This clearly highlights the extrinsic nature of love. We don't love people as subjects, as ends in themselves. We love them merely as means to our own ends, our own pleasure.

The *implicit* noble lies

Most lies are kept implicit to avoid them ever being challenged. Females demand that men lie in order to gain access to sexual and emotional resources. Men are forced to implicitly reproduce the myths that they enjoy paying for sex, by doing things they don't want to do, by paying for the entertainment of their 'dates', and ultimately by having children and marrying. World-wide females make up 50% of the population, however they contribute 66% of all working hours, earn only 10% all income, and own only 1% of all property. Maybe this explains why men have traditionally found it natural to 'pay' for sex.

However the transaction is thus not transparent. Women can deny that such expectations on their part are implicit. They can pretend they are innocent of any mercenary or other motives. They can act innocent and ignorant of the fact that men know they have no choice but to pretend. Thus there is no informed consent and wedding contracts are entered into under coercion. How many men would be monogamous, let alone marry, if women did not coerce them into this? How many relationships could survive any degree of transparency and honesty? Imagine how fragile 'romantic love' must be for the simple act of having sex with another person to be able to destroy it.

Love is the mirage of affection, approval, acceptance, and sensual satisfactions, in the desert a cold, hard, indifferent universe. It is a potent illusion built of desperation. We are in love with the idea of love. It provides us with a false sense of hope, a motivation to go on enduring our lives when all the evidence says 'give up', 'give in'.

The danger of fiction being taken for reality

So many books written from a female or male perspective are written by men or women respectively. Thus the author is posing as someone else. We may be getting a false sense of reality. However it may be that only the opposite sex is capable of being honest about the other sex's motives and so on.

Opportunism and the 'fairer' sex

Female lizards will immediately leave their current mate for one with a larger rock. Rocks work as heat-sinks, soaking up the sun's warmth. Lizards bring their body temperature up to a more optimal operating temperature after a long cold night by warming themselves up on rocks. Remember they are cold blooded. If you move one male lizard's stones to another lizard's territory, the female will 'follow the stones', never hesitating to leave their previous mate behind. What interests them is what a mate has to offer. And the size of his rock is what determines his appeal. I am sure there is a lesson in this somewhere for men :)

The original Dope

Dopamine is associated with all addictions including 'love'. All our sensations are ultimately the product of brain chemistry. Freud referred to love as a 'pathological' condition. Freud's argument has been validated by modern neuro-science and statistics. The feelings associated with 'romantic love' are dramatic. Much of the most violent behavior recorded is associated with 'romantic love'. Nothing is as violent as love in terms of the social chaos, suicide, and homicide, which it produces. The 'rush' of love approximates the brain chemistry of cocaine use. MRI's show that our brains are 'cooked' in dopamine when we feel 'love', even when merely looking at a loved one's photograph.

Relationship life-cycles and changing balances of power and willingness to pay

People are more desperate and vulnerable when they are lonely. They are more likely to construct romantic love out of attraction. They are bound to over-evaluate their lovers, to overlook their faults, to ascribe to them the qualities they want them to have. They are more highly motivated, and willing to make greater sacrifices, to pay more for affection and sex. It has a higher value when it is in short supply. We exaggerate its significance. It has a steep curve of marginal returns.

This is why at the start of relationships people are likely to accept more compromises and sacrifices. They are more generous. They value the possibility of affection, sex, and companionship more, the less of it they have. Desperation drives them to be grateful for whatever they can get. This is the phase of relationships women love. They enjoy being treated like princesses. Men are so grateful to have a mate that they are willing to pay for the privilege. However habituation means that whatever satisfaction we get from something diminishes with repeated exposure to it.

Once men are no longer desperate and vulnerable, they value their mate less. They are more critical and balanced in their evaluation of their mate. They are less willing to pay for sex, affection, and companionship.

This is when the true compatibility of people becomes apparent. This is why most women leave men at this point. They demand material benefits. They demand to be treated by a man how he treated her when he was desperate, lonely, and vulnerable. Usually the partner that takes the break-up hardest is simply the one that doesn't have a new partner waiting in the wings. It is the one who is left alone that finds the break-up disturbing. As they are once more vulnerable and alone, they may, out of desperation, offer all the things they normally would at the start of the relationship.

These are the rewards that provided the initial incentives for the female, and which made the male so attractive, and motivated her to respond positively to his advances. The memory of the shock of her leaving may be enough to overcome the usual habituation this time around.

In any case these dynamics change as each partner meets new people, and gains potential access to new partners. Their newness provides them with greater value relative to the habituation effects of the current partner. With alternate options, the partner will feel less vulnerable and desperate, and will tend to value their partner less, be less willing to make sacrifices, or to pay. Over the course of the relationship the 'balance of power' can change from one to the other partner. In any case infatuation and sexual lust tend to last between 6 and 36 months. This is why most relationships last between 3 and 5 years. The last two years are simply a time of transition. We act betrayed when love's illusions dissolve. But it was we who fooled ourselves into believing.

Fascination and disbelief

When we are desperate for something, it has a massive fascination and appeal for us, like water for the thirsty, and sex for the sexually frustrated. However once we have satisfied our immediate desire, the same thing that held such fascination for us, suddenly leaves us cold, ridiculing ourselves, wondering how this object could have compelled us to such extreme behaviors, expense, effort, and risk-taking.

Monogamy and diversification

Biological diversification is advantageous to the survival of a species as a whole. For this reason evolution is favored by, and tends to produce, organisms that are not monogamous.

Sealed bid 'romantic' auctions

Females do the screening of men. Men are forced to endure most of the rejection. They are required to take most of the initiative. They are required to make most of the 'investment' in the screening process. It would be gentler on men if they could make 'sealed bids'. People should have some context to meet and see each other without any up-front investment of time, money, or self-esteem. They could then place 'sealed bids' which only the parties involved would ever see. Then men would only end up investing in women they had a real chance of 'getting'.

Bringing transparency to marriage vows

I remember an Australian television comedy sketch show in which the man and woman expressed the marriage vows that would reflect real life. Of course comedy is one of the few arenas where people can express the truth. One reason we laugh is out of a sense of relief. Usually something is funny because it is true, but something that conventional expectations prevent us from expressing publicly.

Marriage contracts should be real with clauses defining all foreseeable situations and conditions across the life-cycle of relationships. Explicit penalties must be included for failure to meet any of these obligations. This would ensure people went into marriage with their eyes wide open. It would provide for genuine holistically informed consent. People would be required to approach marriage and reproduction with a sober recognition of the facts. Marriage vows should be made contractual and real. Romantic illusions are fine for love affairs. However when reproduction and other commitments are likely, we need to take the matter seriously.

Perhaps no-one should be allowed to marry or reproduce within the first 3 years of a relationships, as this is, statistically, how long 'romantic love' and 'infatuation' last. The contract would specify grounds for divorce, what would constitute unacceptable behavior, what each party really expects of the other in real, practical, concrete terms. Such things are too important to be left to chance and wishful thinking.

Of course having pre-defined the grounds for a dissolution of the marriage, divorce courts would become irrelevant. Today the average process in an Australian family court costs 20,000 dollars. This is money that should be spent on the education and care of the children, rather than in allowing parents to vent their own frustrations, disappointment, anger, and hatred. It is time we 'got real' about marriage.

And of course this raises the question of 'who would get married' under such conditions. Well that is perhaps the whole point of these recommendations. Marriage as an institution may be inappropriate for most people. Of course the many beneficiaries of the status quo will defend it as ideal, as the 'best of all possible alternatives', simple to protect their own benefits. However a sober analysis of the situation, one that takes a holistic overview, and considers the interests of the most vulnerable members of our society, the not-yet-conceived, will focus equally on the costs, as on the benefits. And not just the costs for those with the power to defend their interests, but the costs for everyone, even the not-yet-conceived.

Marriage contracts void as entered into under coercion

When a woman threatens to withdraw access to her sexual and emotional resources the man is placed in a desperate situation. If his life is not worth living without his mate, and the only way to keep her is to marry her, then in fact he is entering into the marriage contract under threat and coercion. In many other situations this would void the contract, making it invalid. Where monogamy is the only way to meet your sexual and emotional needs, and the consequence of denial of access is desperation, then women are really blackmailing men into marrying them. They are forced to enter into the marriage under duress.

If you do not believe that women use men as means to their ends, then make the following offer to as many women as you can find, and see what response you get. How many women do you expect would be with a man who makes it clear upfront that will not pay for sex in any way, does not want relationship, does not want kids, will not be anyone's slave, will not offer anything except what he wants in return, sex, affection, and friendship. How desperate for sex do females have to be before they will exchange sex for sex without any ulterior motives? And if alcohol is taken out of the equation, how many fewer still?

Females often refuse men sex to spite them. Why should they get what they want! The woman wants a slave who will provide for her, and the children, well actually babies, and young children, that she wants.

Among the illusions that women promote is that it takes more effort and sacrifice for a woman to be physically attractive than it does for a man. This is rubbish. Men have to starve themselves, work out, get sunburn, and even pay more for clothing than women do, all in order to look good. Another illusion is that sex is more fulfilling for men than women. Many women are still unaware that men can ejaculate without any orgasm.

Women simply assume that if a man ejaculates, that he has just experienced an orgasm, and thus sexual satisfaction. Women demand men work hard to get them to orgasm, whereas many women will make little effort to satisfy their partner, either emotionally or physically. Many women today complain they cannot find sexual partners. This is due to the availability of pornography through which men can relieve their sexual frustrations, without all the lies, expense, and games of finding a sexual partner.

When people are in love, and feel this love reciprocated, they live in a delusion. It is only when one partner 'falls out of love' that the implicit expectations and motives of both parties are revealed. People convince themselves that they did not mind paying in so many ways, and making so many sacrifices for their partner, or putting up with so many irritations and frustrations. While they are in love the drugs in their body compensate for all these negative things. The unrealistic dreams people have for each other, the anticipated future rewards and changes that they expect from their partners, all the benefits, outweigh these costs in the first 6 to 36 months.

However once the drugs wear off, and the expectations and hopes prove unwarranted and unrealistic, the costs come to the fore. The hostility that was temporarily over-whelmed by the love, now comes to the fore. The masks fall away. The actors see they are not going to get what they want from the other, what they had taken for granted that they would get. Now that the love has worn off, they are able to be more honest with themselves. Suddenly people who claimed to love each other a few months ago, now hate each other.

They demonize each other at least to the extent that they had previously idolized each other. It becomes clear that they were in fact using each other as means to their own ends. Otherwise there is no way to explain the nastiness that emerges near the end of relationships. If the love was real, if the mutual concern was real, then they would be able to part as friends. They would of course be disappointed, however they would not blame each other.

When the female complains 'he was only using me for sex' she is actually implicitly shouting out loud the fact that she had been using him for something. Otherwise how could he use her for sex? If you have sex because you want to have sex, how can your partner possibly be using you? This can only be true if you were having sex with ulterior motives, with the expectation of extrinsic rewards.

So such a complaint is really an implicit admission that she was using him. She is simply angry that he got what he wanted, but she didn't. The only context in which such anger makes sense is if she was using sex to get

something else, and didn't get it. This means the man was being honest, whereas the woman was deceiving him that she wanted sex.

Any agreement between humans is only as strong as the intention to honor it

Two surrogate lesbians made a written agreement with man to get his informed consent to donate sperm to fulfill their desire to become parents. They promised him an active role in the child's life. However as soon as they got what they wanted, they refused him any parenting rights. Their agreement was not legally binding. There was no legal precedent that would make their agreement binding. This is typical of human's in my experience. A contract is only as strong as the intention of the participants to honor it.

As soon as the most powerful party gets what they want, they tend to disregard their agreement. Thus no true 'informed' consent was gained. They had gained the other party's consent with deception. They had not informed him of their intentions. In any case a contract can only be defined as truly 'legally binding' where the state itself which has the power to coerce both parties to honor it, also provides free access to the legal resources required to get the state to exercise this power.

Feminists can complain that all women are prostitutes, but when a man makes the same observation?

Feminists will complain that females prostitute themselves in exchange for security, a home, a husband-provider-slave. However they will act insulted when a male makes the same observation in exactly the same context. The difference is that feminists want to define women as the victim in this situation, when in fact it is the man who is the victim. He is being forced to pay for sex, to enslave himself to a woman, family, and household debts.

Women act as if men should feel privileged that a woman would prostitute herself. It is women who are the most deceptive when it comes to this situation. They insist men pretend they are happy with the situation. This is why feminists must define the woman as the victim. This is necessary to distract men from interrogating the situation, and revealing how they themselves are in fact the victim.

Disingenuous women: methinks she doth dissemble

On a German television documentary, a previous Miss Germany was complaining that her Mr Germany was no longer treating her as he used to. She says she 'feared' he was cheating, and she was going to leave him once she found out for sure. It sounded more like she hoped he was cheating, and had already made up her mind that she wanted to leave him. This was her true motive for paying a woman to try to seduce him, to tempt him, to see if he would take the bait. He didn't.

She had wanted to leave him, as he had stopped treating her like a princess. If she could trick him into 'cheating' on her, she could leave the relationship with the morally superior status of victim. Thus she would be free of any guilt. She would gain a moral superiority over the man. She could have her cake and eat it too. She could do what she desired, but appear to be reacting to his action. His failure to be tempted foiled her plans, conscious or otherwise.

Females force men to lie, then imagine they are morally superior

Females force men to lie, and then claim that all men are liars. Women know men want sex. Often they are desperate for sex. Women withhold sex from men who will not lie.

Women also want sex. If the men did not lie, the women would not get sex either. However females force men to take on all the 'moral' responsibility for the lies. Thus women manufacture their own 'moral' superiority. In fact men's lies are derivative of the females' coercion. Therefore in reality the women are just as 'morally' culpable. This also promotes inauthenticity in relationships. Authentic relationships are based on synergistic, mutually reciprocal interests, and shared goals.

Presently the only truly transparent relationship between men and women is that of sex-worker and client. If women want authentic relationships that have a chance of enduring, they must stop manipulating men with sex. They should only have sex with men they want to. And they should have as much sex as they can, to ensure that men are sexually satisfied, and have no need to lie to get sex. Then relationships can begin on an honest footing. Lust and infatuation last between 6 and 36 months.

If women truly do want long term relationships, they need to build them on more enduring foundations. However I suspect women simply enjoy having an excuse to act on their own desires to leave relationships after 3 years, after the man has ceased to be willing to pay anymore, due to habituation. They do not have to admit this. They can opportunistically wait for the man to seek sexual satisfaction elsewhere, or engage in passive aggressive acts which are likely to provoke behaviors that will allow the woman to define herself as an innocent victim of the relationship.

Optimalise rather than compromise

It is unfair to blame anyone for their holistic inheritance, including those particularly male and female desires. They are to a great degree incompatible, and this is a natural, endemic source of conflict. We have different desires and therefore motives. However instead of compromises which cost both, and satisfy neither, it is time to optimize, to get the best deal compatible with both sets of desires. This will require generative, creative thinking, and an open-minded approach to the definition and solution.

Constructing mystical Love

We have been trained to define love and lust as distinctly different, and to define love as 'morally' superior to lust. We are socialized into a romantic ideal through movies, stories, songs, and mythology. We want love to be eternal. This would be something concrete in the universe to hold onto, something above the epiphenomenal and meaningless reality of our experience. Love could justify all the suffering, misery, indifference and pointlessness of our existence. Love is the ultimate religion. God is love.

Those who have given up on finding an ulterior meaning for their lives find refuge in the idea of undying love. After every other myth has been revealed as illusion, love represents the last bastion of hope to save ourselves, to save the world, from incredulity. Idealized love, then, serves the need for significance and 'meaning', when all other sources of potential meaning and significance have failed us. Thus the ultimate 'narrative' in the post-modern sense is the love story.

Would people enter into relationships with their eyes wide open?

We need each other to make our lives worth living, but we need different things from each other and at different times. Could we make it work without cheating? Lying? Misleading? Playing games to get what we need? Love is real, but limited in duration, and unreliable. Are we generous enough to give each other the freedom to get from others what we cannot get from each other? Or are our relationships based on sacrifice, on the assumption of exclusivity. Is monopoly the only form of intimate relationship we are capable of? Do our limited resources, time, and energy, mean we are only capable of devoting it to anyone on the condition that they reciprocate, and make us their number one priority? Most realistic people today accept that serial monogamy is the ideal.

However how many offer their partners informed consent in this? How many are transparent in their relationships? Are we incapable of entering into a relationship with our eyes wide open? Would too few people be willing to enter into a relationship with the condition that it will be of limited duration? More to the point, would men be willing to invest so much in such a three year relationship? In reality most people are aware that at least half of marriages will last less than 5 years, usually souring within the first 3 years.

However they all imagine that they are 'special'. Their love feels strong, and 'special'. Surely no-one else ever felt this way! Men pay a fiancé with diamonds, a wife with gold, and mother with a house. Would they be willing to pay such high costs for a 3 to 5 year relationship?

Fathers are parents too

Fathers have the same 'moral' responsibility to care and nurture their children as mothers do. They have no right to neglect their children by working long hours. They have a responsibility to be physically and emotionally accessible to their children. They have to choose between being a father and being a high-flier. They will have to make sacrifices to be a father. The children do not care if daddy drives a Mercedes or an old Toyota. Children don't care if daddy is the CEO or the security guard. Children want daddy to be there, and to show them that they are important to him.

The same goes for mommy. It is not a question of being a career woman or mother. It is about being a career person or a parent. What applies for men applies for women. You might be able to have it all, but you will be denying your children what they need to grow up feeling approved of, accepted, and secure. It is not about you having it all, it is about your children having what they need, and should have a legally enforceable right to. They don't need luxury cars, narcissistic status goods and prestige, luxury holidays, or huge screen televisions. They need the love, attention, time, patience, and care of their parents. If they are not their parent's priority, then they will know it.

Men and women must have equal rights to parental leave. They are both parents. Our society does men a real violence when it forces them into unrewarding careers, and denies them their authenticity as whole loving, caring, affectionate, nurturing, supportive parents. Women often want to monopolize this aspect of being human for themselves. Doing so is committing grave acts of violence upon men, and upon children. I haven't heard anyone fighting to allow men the right to a career and a family.

While we are on the subject of emotional apartheid, how often are male eating disorders reported? Women go on as if men are naturally thin and attractive. Of course they must discipline and torture themselves as much as a woman does to look attractive. On top of that they are meant to be providers. They are implicitly demonized for wanting sex. They are then violently attacked by their partners when they lose interest in sex. They are taught that they are unworthy, and must pay women for their affection, either directly as money, or in the forms of material benefits.

At present the majority of men follow the convention of providing women with material benefits in return for the opportunity to express their sexuality, and in fact give women sexual pleasure. It is an unspoken, naturalized instrumental transaction. I am not talking about prostitution, but the general expectation that a man will show a woman a good time, take her out, buy her presents, and so on. The convention, the norm, goes unchallenged. Women claim to seek equality. If they want equality, then they must desist in exploiting men in this way. The only reason a woman should engage in sexual relations with a man is that she wants to have sex with him. This is the only authentic sexual interaction.

I am appalled by the best-selling 'Venus-Mars' books which more or less appeal to men to pay for sex and affection, as a means to keeping their partners and relationships. Rather than challenge the dominant hegemonic definitions of men as 'material benefactors' and women as 'prostitutes', and the systems of relations they are reflexive of, in which men are exploited by women materially, and females, supposedly, are exploited by men sexually, the author of those books approaches the whole subject as totally unproblematic, merely reinforcing the dominant hegemonic point of view.

Although he makes some good points, about men and their caves and feeling that 'talk' is unproductive, and that they are responsible for finding solutions that women don't really expect of them, and that they should learn the importance of just 'expressing' themselves and 'listening', he ultimately does more damage than good by by subscribing to and reinforcing the dominant hegemonic definitions and reflexive systems of relations.

When are women going to seek equality, and stop abusing men in this way?

We cannot consider sexuality outside the wider societal context. Every interaction produces consequences. Authentic interactions produce healthy individual and societal consequences. Exploitative ones produce exploitative

consequences. Change brings costs and benefits. Seeking to hold onto benefits and avoiding the costs of change produces inauthentic interactions and problematic outcomes. No-one can escape the consequences of their actions.

It is reported that around 25% of females suffer depression. How often do researchers ask men about how they feel? Do women really care? Women deny men their emotional authenticity, invalidating their need for the same forms of emotional expression as women have access to. Women then complain when men express themselves in the only way society defines as masculine, through physical violence. A man cannot call the police when his partner emotionally abuses him. Emotional violence is just as damaging, if not more, than physical violence. Few people empathize with men. We are taught that men are tough. Women make fun of sensitive males. They want to keep a monopoly. They like to talk about their feelings. About their feelings.

In reality we don't love a *person*, we love what they can *do* for us, including how they can make us feel

We want to include things into our 'whole' because they make us feel good, they taste, smell, feel, sound, or make us 'feel', good. We love things because they bring us one form of pleasure or another. We hate what brings us pain, what tastes, smells, feels, sounds, or makes us feel bad. We construct mystical and magical romantic love out of a combination of all of these things. We love people who seem to accept and approve of us, who make us feel good about ourselves, who reassure us that we are ok, and validate our subjective reality.

We usually like people who reinforce our own picture of the world, who have similar beliefs, and even behaviors. This allows us to 'be ourselves' around them, and develop intimacy and trust. This gives us feelings of acceptance and approval and security. We like how they taste and smell, and feel. We love the sensual and erotic feelings they provide us with, or we love being desired and valued as sexual creatures. We love the material goods and services they may provide, and the opportunity to partner children with them. If we love the idea of children, then we will love our partner for making it possible to have them, and to share the responsibilities and joys of parenting.

However habituation means that the pleasure we experience in association with anything tends to diminish with exposure to it. Over time our partners provide less good feelings and sensations. Things we assumed we could and would change about the other prove stubbornly resistant to change. We each felt accepted and approved of as we were, little did we know that our partner was assuming we would change. It was in reality the ideal of the other, and what they could and would become, that each approved of. In fact they were in love with an ideal they had constructed, using the real person as a screen to project on, a stick figure to flesh out.

Partners don't love each other. They love how the other makes them feel, what the other gives them, what they do for them. At first they will be very generous and accepting and provide nothing but positive feedbacks and feelings. They feel insecure, and are working to earn the others approval, acceptance, and physical attentions. Once they feel that they have won their prize, they begin to behave more authentically. They become themselves. Sooner or later the rewards and benefits of the relationship wane. The sexual attraction diminishes with familiarity.

Familiarity breeds contempt. Cute habits become irritating. Frustrating habits become unbearable. The real people emerge. The gloss wears thin. The relationship becomes work. It is at this point that most people realize that there is no enduring foundation for their relationship. If they have children they may feel obliged to remain together for their sake. They may feel social pressure to remain together, and play 'happy families'. In the past the church threatened to excommunicate them. They could either endure their marriage or endure an eternity in hell.

Some people simply just cannot admit their failure to the world. They endure their bad relationships to avoid admitting defeat. They had had a beautiful white wedding and had sworn before all their significant others that they would love and cherish each other, for life. They had made it. They were successes. They can't bear admitting they have failed. They don't want to give their enemies the satisfaction. They can't bear the thought of being alone. They would rather live a sham relationship than own up to the reality. Often this feeling is mutual. Where it isn't, one partner often takes the initiative and ends the relationship.

A reasonable person would enjoy relationships for what they were, and not base a whole society around the myths of what they should be. They would not force children to suffer. They would not base their childrearing around an ideal that can't be lived up to.

They would make sober decisions about childrearing, and arrange stable relationships that can endure, based on enduring models of relationship and parenthood. While it is great to love someone, and to really immerse yourself in the wonderful experiences and feelings, and even imagine that it will be eternal, and enjoy that illusion, that feeling of security and emotion, a reasonable person would enjoy the epiphenomena for what it is, real but un-enduring. They would not arrange their long term lives around a fragile and short-term condition.

A reasonable person would plan for the day when the wonderful epiphenomena burns out, and set up insurance policies and safety nets. When the magic dies, they would not convince themselves that real love exists somewhere else, that this particular experience, this particular person, was just a mistake, and then go on from one

'mistake' to another, always seeking a Mr or Ms. 'right'. They would sadly recognize the end of the dream, and see it for what it was, a mutually satisfying experience that is only satisfying for so long. They would not blame and demonize each other. They would simply accept that they had just experienced the natural life-cycle of romantic and sensual love affairs.

If they had looked after themselves during their relationship they will be attractive and will have no problem finding a new partner. If they are bitter and disillusioned, because they still subscribe to myths of eternal love, they will not be very attractive. Women of a certain age, who are no longer objects of desire, are usually the most bitter. They will complain that they had wasted their youth on the man. They had invested in the lie of eternal love, and maybe had denied their relationship had burnt out decades before. They are really angry with themselves for having tried to force the relationship. They will have defined their behavior as a sacrifice. But they are responsible themselves for whatever love they 'wasted'. They subscribed to the idea of mythical love. If they had not denied reality, they would not be in the situation they are in.

If they claim they 'sacrificed' their youths to their husbands, giving him children and a family, and that therefore their husband 'owes' them something, then they are living in denial. It was most likely the woman that was so desperate for a family and children. She got exactly what she wanted. She didn't sacrifice herself to give the man a family and children, she was satisfying her own selfish desires for reproduction. She has nothing to complain about. Her husband made the realization of her dreams, the satisfaction of her lust for reproduction, possible.

Any complaints are just sour grapes, and attempts to appear 'the victim', to gain sympathy and material 'compensation'. If it turned out that family and children weren't the satisfying experience she expected, then that is just 'tough cookies'. If she is going to be angry with anyone it should be her mother, grandmother, priests, aunts, and friends who lied to her about motherhood and parenthood. Or maybe she should just take responsibility for her own self-deceit and wishful thinking regarding the experience of motherhood.

We must recognize the costs and benefits of the experience of love, in order to optimize the experience of love. We have to be honest, or we will suffer the consequences. You can maintain a lie for a long time, but sooner or later it will come back to haunt you. Lies have long legs, they will catch up with you sooner or later. Deny reality as much as you want now, pretend to be an exception to the rule. You may be. But most likely you will have to face up to the truth sooner or later, and suffer unnecessarily for your stubbornness now. What angers and depresses me is that you will force your children, and the not-yet-conceived, to suffer later for your current stubborn denial and wishful thinking.

One 'negative' aspect of 'Love' is that it often makes people more conservative. When you are 'in love' with someone, you are vulnerable to the fear of something bad happening to them. You are less likely to confront people, to challenge them, or to rock the boat, for fear that such behavior could have negative repercussions for your loved one. You have yours, and will not risk losing it. You will be more likely to focus on your private bliss than on public problems.

You are more likely to act according to what you feel is in the interests of you loved ones and your relationship with them, rather than with regard to any principles. The strongest of people are vulnerable to threats made against their loved ones. Further, when relationships fall apart, at least one of the couple is likely to feel hurt, used, or victimized. People often feel a great deal of anger, even hate, and desire for revenge. Those that don't feel this way will at least feel a loss goodwill, faith and trust.

Love, sex, and power

At the same time as we learn to define love as such a pure, noble, and eternal good, we learn to define sex as dirty, as sin, as something we need to defend ourselves from, lest we succumb to our urges and animalistic natures. The church and other institutions have managed to steal the innocence from sex. They have trained us to define 'romantic' or 'platonic' love as purity and innocence, and sexuality as dirty, even sin. They have gone so far as to demonize sexuality. In many societies today many forms of natural, innocent, authentic sexuality are still defined as unnatural, sinful, and even criminal.

It is infuriating to consider that people have been forcibly institutionalized and criminalized because of their sexuality. This shows how important the control over the definitions of sexuality and love are. The hegemonic powers are willing to destroy anything of value merely to maintain their own power and privileges. They institutionalize definitions which serve their own interests, at whatever cost to others these definitions impose.

What interests could they have, you may ask? How does someone's private sexuality become a matter for public, even legal, interest? Why do social and legal sanctions against private, consensual sexual interactions exist? Definitions arise as a function of who has power, and what they use it for. Where power is in the hands of people with holistic intelligence and enlightened intentions, definitions will serve the interests of all individuals.

Where power is wielded by a privileged, unenlightened minority, it will be abused to serve their own interests. The beneficiary classes consume value they do not produce. Who produces this value? Labor. Who fights wars? Labor. Who pays taxes and tithes? Labor. And if labor do not reproduce themselves?

Hegemonic definitions of love as superior to lust

Love, according to the hegemonic definitions, is superior to lust. To love someone who is not attractive is defined as 'morally' superior to allowing oneself to be seduced by physical attraction. This reflexively defines paying attention to beauty as less moral than attending to other qualities, such as religious piety, and personality. This reflexively denies the value of physical appearance-beauty, and sexual attractiveness-lust. This reflexively derides the notion of engineering a society with consideration for physical appearance, in order to improve life experience.

The experience of hot, hungry sex with beautiful, sexy, sensual, people is not considered to be nice or worthy of promotion. In many cultures this sort of experience is defined as dirty, even sinful, if it doesn't occur in heaven after sacrificing your life as a martyr in some jihad. Some cultures forbid women from being sexy at all, going so far as to deny them their sexuality by removing their major sources of sexual gratification, their clitoris and labia. However the Christian church manages to mutilate female sexual expression psychologically, and so has no need to resort to physical mutilation. This is clearly a form of violence.

Females are happy to exploit male sexuality, to manipulate men into paying for sex, in one way or another, but then complain, ridicule, and demonize men because of it when it suits their purposes. When women have desperation-emergency sex-affection, they can choose the next day if they like the guy or not. If they do, they can act like a victim when their desire is not reciprocated. If they don't, they can act incredulous and completely innocent, as if it was clear from the start that it was a one-night stand, and even ridicule him for wanting more, or imagining she could possibly want more from 'someone like him'.

A bit of realism wouldn't hurt

Most women are far from beautiful princesses, and yet show me a girl or woman who does not implicitly and tacitly expect to be treated like one. They all dream of landing a handsome, rich, charming prince, a knight in shining armor. However few are helpless, beautiful, damsels. If you are exceptional, then you can demand exceptional treatment. If you are a rare commodity, then you can expect men to 'pay' for the privilege of enjoying your company.

Of course when men are desperate, they over-rate their mates, and are willing to 'pay' for their affections. However, in the cold light of sobriety, they are unlikely to continue with their generosity. So don't expect it. Base your relationship on shared values, desires, and goals. Seek to build on synergies that actually exist, in partnership. And stop treating men as props in your wedding plans!

Why can't he keep it in his pants until he gets home?

Females gain more benefits from monogamy than men. They feel less of a desperate desire for sexual variety. The greatest aphrodisiac is variety. Nothing compares to this. Habituation means any particular stimulus loses its power to satisfy over time. Lust and sexual satisfaction are positive experiences which add value to life. Women gain more satisfaction from babies than sex. In fact they focus on this from the start, searching more for food 'fathers' and 'providers' than hot sex partners. This is a fact. They do not mind making this sacrifice, as the rewards outweigh the costs for them.

However they are then selfish and unreasonable in denying men the chance to benefit from opportunities for great sex that occasionally arise. It is unjust for women to 'downplay' men's needs, and act as if they are morally superior, when in fact they are merely satisfying their own needs. There is no need to compromise. People who really cared about each other's interests would want each other to be happy and satisfied. They would not begrudge their partners harmless pleasures, simply out of insecurity, and jealousy. There is no point waiting till he gets home, as he is not 'hungry' for what is waiting for him.

This does not mean he does not love and care for his wife. It is simply a fact that infatuation and lust last from 6 to 36 months, and then the relationship must offer alternative 'sticks and carrots' to motivate the partnership. However women be warned, shared offspring are more likely to lead to divorce than to 'bind'. However I guess that once women have this, and the legal right to maintenance, they have gotten the best of the relationship already. They have little motive to 'work on the relationship'. This is why most relationships tend to end at this point, after the woman has stopped having babies, and the man has lost the sexual interest that made up for all the costs he had till then had compensatory benefits for, and incentives to put up with.

Sexuality and beauty as real sources of value for positive life experience

There are few things that have as much potential for improving our life experience as beauty and sexuality. The lack of beauty, and access to sexual resources, is often a source of negative social development and behavior. It is impossible to compensate for a lack of physical attractiveness. True justice requires that everyone should inherit a positive physical appearance. We might call it 'aesthetic justice'.

A holistically enlightened philosopher would seek to improve access to positive sexual experiences. This would lead to considerations about erotica, pornography, and improving sexual relations. Improving the genetic appearance of people would ensure a natural supply of physical attraction and innocent sexual lust. Bringing transparency to human sexuality and relationships will allow us to optimize our relationships and experiences. Here the philosopher is in their element, for honesty is demanded, and interrogation skills.

Most people are so de-coupled from their sexuality, so socialized away from their innocence, that real interrogation is necessary. A philosopher can know no shame, have no fear, have no prejudices, and seek to free themselves from the hegemonic constraints others are limited by. First they must interrogate themselves. In order to do this they must either have experience in an area, or be able to interrogate others, and empathize with them, experiencing through them 'vicariously'.

Everything *can*, nut nothing *must*

The simple way to improve sexual relations is to be free of taboos, to define all lusts as innocent. This does not mean encouraging that participants act on all sexual desires. Some desires should not be acted on, as they might deny the other participants informed consent. The first rule of sexual engagement is that all participants must be willing, and able, to comprehend what it is they are agreeing to take part in. But the most important thing is that no sexual desire or fantasy be defined as wrong, that they shouldn't desire it. It is often merely a case of finding a partner who shares the same fantasy or desire. It is rare that only one person among thousands has a particular fetish or 'turn-on'. In most cases people are shocked by totally harmless fantasies and desires merely due to their socialization and sexual de-authentication.

Sharing sexual fantasies is an act of intimacy and trust, and these two things are extremely sexy. All sex takes place in the brain. Invalidation, rejection, and disapproval, are real arousal killers. In fact one of the greatest experiences of the sexual interaction is the acceptance and validation the actors gain as a result of being desired, accepted, and approved of. Of course not everyone has the same lusts, and it is unreasonable to expect all your desires to be accommodated by one person. Often the greatest sexual arousal is derived from the newness of the other, the exploration of a new person, their sexual responses, desires, and physical 'topography'.

Innocent physical attraction is physical. A person finds another attractive or not. A beautiful and sexy person will be found more attractive by more people than a less attractive one. Then of course there are other characteristics such as intelligence, which are equally physical properties. The other properties such as wealth, wit, warmth, understanding, and other charms, are combinations of physical and social properties. They are all more or less measurable and duplicable, in terms of engineering an attractive person, or one that will be considered attractive by others. Attractive people experience the acceptance and approval of their peers, and their sexual desire. These are all positive experiences which enhance the value of their lives. Few people would not wish to be more physically attractive and charming. There would be less bitchiness, envy and mobbing of the attractive and talented if we were all attractive and talented.

No-one is recommending punishing people for being ugly, stupid, incompetent and untalented. However the holistically enlightened philosopher seeks to stop these qualities being reproduced. They will seek to ensure that fewer people are punished by being conceived ugly, incompetent, stupid, and untalented, by ensuring everyone has genetic, and aesthetic, justice. If you want to live in denial, then do so. But you have no right to force your not-yet conceived children to suffer for your denial. What is the point in arguing that people can lead happy, successful, rewarding, satisfying lives in spite of their physical ugliness, diseases, disabilities, and so on. Everyone alive today would prefer to be more attractive, healthy, talented, competent, intelligent, and so on. It is unacceptable to punish our children for our own fear of being defined as 'inferior' by our contemporaries.

Why waste energy trying to deny that some traits are more desirable than others, just to avoid accepting our own weaknesses and faults? Should we glorify ugliness and stupidity, or deformity and intellectual disability in the name of 'diversity', just so people don't have to admit the obvious? If it didn't produce avoidable misery over countless generations, then I would happily participate in the fantasy. However it does. And therefore, as a responsible person, I am obliged to speak up.

Everyone deserves respect, access to opportunities, justice, equality, and equal rewards for equal effort, sacrifice, and risk. Everyone has a duty to ensure that they provide their next generation with the optimal resources they can. If you are stupid and ugly and untalented and incompetent, then you have the right to be rewarded for your effort rather than your poor inheritance. However this model will only function if you also honor your obligation to control your desires to reproduce yourself, and your undesirable, suboptimal traits. The society as a whole will not be able to maintain justice if its members, as individuals, do not themselves observe principles of justice. If we are to maintain a high quality of life we need high quality people capable of producing real value, and experiencing real value. If we continue to allow just anyone to reproduce, then the growing population of unhealthy,

incompetent, unintelligent, untalented, unattractive people will undermine the positive direction of the society. You cannot achieve and maintain equality whilst reproducing real inequality.

If reducing the number of flowers only leaves more sunlight for an even greater number of 'weeds' to sprout up? If working hard and being productive merely means that less productive, ambitious, hardworking, disciplined, and innovative people will not only consume the value produced, but increase their own numbers, and the relative proportion of less productive people, then what motive would they have to work hard, make sacrifices, and take risks? Unless the unfortunate are willing to sacrifice their rights to reproduction, there is no point in the fortunate sacrificing any of the benefits they currently enjoy. If you want justice, you have to give justice to the not-yet-conceived.

Re-distributing resources in an attempt to construct an artificial equality is counterproductive in the long term. The U.S.S.R was rich in natural resources, and began with the same general quality of human resources as 'The West'. It destroyed some of its most valuable and productive human resources, and then wasted those remaining. It denied inequality, reproduced inequality, and then sought to impose equality upon the unequal. It didn't work. It couldn't work. You can deny reality till you all die, but you can't escape it. Quality of life, the production of real value, and positive life experience cannot be fabricated. You can produce mendacious propaganda telling you that you are producing more chocolate every year, but that propaganda won't taste like chocolate. You can pretend you are doing well, and congratulate yourselves, but pretending won't produce any quality of life.

Evolutionary psychology/biology/sociology: Physical attraction and the evolution of the beneficiary classes

If we are to 'progress' as a species, then we will have to come to terms with making qualitative judgments about people, and acting on them. We will have to find a way to make solidarity consistent with discrimination. The subtle distinctions I make throughout all my writing, and seek to have incorporated into the popular language culture, are key to this 'progress'.

Evolutionary psychology reminds us that most of our behaviors are adapted to the Paleolithic environment in which they evolved, rather than the modern environment. Some of the impulses and behaviors that served us well during the course of our evolution, are quite maladapted to our current circumstances. There is no need to ponder upon 'junk' genes, or non-adaptive traits. Any problems we have with trying to 'understand' such things is merely reflexive of an implicitly teleological mindset, one in which we tend to assume that everything must serve some function. In reality some traits are reproduced despite being maladapted. As long as the 'whole' of the organism can survive and reproduce, and it faces no better adapted competition for mates, or resources, it can afford to carry some 'dead' baggage and maladapted 'parts'.

Many people have missed this point when claiming that eating meat must be good for us as we desire to eat it and are able to eat it. Others have claimed that because religion exists, and tendencies towards religious practice and belief exist, religion must be a positive factor in human social evolution, that religion must therefore be adaptive. It is like arguing that rape is good, as we can rape, and many people want to. Therefore rape must be adaptive, and should be encouraged, like eating meat and the Catholic Church.

We have receptors for opiates and hallucinogenics, but that doesn't mean we 'should' smoke crack, or eat magic mushrooms. Or does it? These are all fallacies of teleological functionalism, the assumption that because something can be adapted to serve some function, it must have been designed and created with that function in mind. Hence my ability to rape would be taken as implicit evidence that god wants me to rape. However my ability to masturbate is apparently an oversight on the part of the intelligent designer god. According to God's most published 'Saint', rape is morally superior to masturbation.

If you gain pleasure from sex, and satisfaction from parenting, you are more likely to have sex, be good parents, and ensure that your genes are passed on to a new generation. These behavioral tendencies will come to define the species over time as they promote reproduction and the survival of offspring to reproductive age.

Sexual desire is a key factor in the production of human intelligence and technological innovation. If each member of a species shares the desire to have sex with the most attractive and competent individuals of the species, then they will all compete for this limited resource. They will seek to outperform their competition. It is accepted today that most of our status symbols are aimed at attracting attractive sexual partners. We are motivated to 'achieve' in order to ensure access to the most desirable sexual resources. Only the strongest, most attractive, successful, and competent individuals will get to have sex with the most attractive individuals.

Over time this will mean that each new generation is likely to contain a sub-species of increasingly attractive, intelligent, talented, and able individuals. The species will tend to 'evolve', over time, a sub-species with the particular qualities of strength, beauty, intelligence, talent, and ability. This more or less defines the 'beneficiary classes'. They are the beneficiaries of this superior holistic inheritance, which they employ instrumentally to gain access to power, privilege, and further benefits. They have the least motive to reduce inequality, as they are the beneficiaries of it. The benefits they enjoy are largely a function of relative inequality in society.

Our intentions, our wills, are merely an expression of emotional urges or desires, of behavioral tendencies and instincts. We do not 'act' as such. We react. We respond to our innate and learned definitions and desires. If something makes us feel good, we will desire it. We desire things that make us feel good, that bring us pleasure. We are averse to things that we associate with displeasure. Our motivation is determined by our emotions and feelings.

We merely rationalize our behavior after the fact. All behavioral instincts will be reproduced, if they do not conflict with survival and reproduction. Those that actually promote survival and reproduction, offering some competitive advantage to the organism, will tend to become most prominent among the members of a species over time.

Full lips and short lower jaws are the effects of high levels of the female sex hormone estrogen, which means they are accurate indicators of female fertility. Prominent, strong lower jaws are the effect of high levels of the male sex hormone, testosterone, and are therefore accurate indicators of male fertility. Research indicates that females will seek a very hard or masculine looking male for a sexual 'fling', but will seek out a more softer or feminine looking male for a long term relationship. During ovulation, when females are most fertile, and most likely to fall pregnant, they will be more attracted to the hard masculine looking males.

A high forehead, large eyes, and small nose, are attractors of baby faces. We find the same characteristics attractive in adults. It seems the closer the adult face conforms to the baby face, the more attractive we find it. There are mathematical proportions that can be used to produce a face that most people will find attractive, independent of the absolute features. It seems to be about particular proportions, the size of one element in relation to another, and the whole. It seems also to be about angles. These proportions and angles will no doubt prove to be functional. Large clear eyes indicate good vision and health, as does clear skin free of the blemishes or scars associated with earlier diseases. Straight, healthy teeth are clearly functional, as are long, slender, muscular limbs. Muscle tone is a clear indication of health and strength. Good eye-hand coordination is important for hunting and warfare. The forms we find beautiful tend to reveal themselves to be functional, in terms of strength, agility, endurance, integrity, speed, and so on. Thus beauty is far from merely 'skin-deep'. Rather than being superficial, beauty is in fact functional.

Behavioral tendencies, such as pleasure seeking, the valuation of physical beauty and intelligence in sexual mates, the gaining of pleasure from sex, and from being good parents, will promote the reproduction of those tendencies, and the associated physical traits they correspond to, that is, physical beauty and intelligence. While it is considered politically incorrect to admit it, discrimination on the grounds of intelligence and physical appearance are beneficial to the production of beautiful and intelligent offspring.

The often situational nature of attraction

When you are lonely and unwelcome in the world, then you are prone to welcome any warmth and affection, and the feelings you have for someone may be exaggerated by your vulnerability and desperation. You may be impressed by someone you meet simply because you haven't met many people.

We generally construct the person in our mind, and give them characteristics we want them to have, and exaggerate and play down particular qualities to make them more appealing to us. Out of desperation, or out of wishful thinking, we construct our partners to be what we want them to be. Eventually these constructions implode in the face of reality. Now we have someone, we aren't so desperate, and maybe we could do better. We will find some excuse to end the relationship. The situation has changed. The partner no longer represents what they originally did. We didn't have an authentic, innocent lust for them, or we have discovered less attractive aspects about them which we genuinely weren't aware of, or things about ourselves we weren't aware of. Or we are exposed to greater opportunities for meeting new people.

A relationship can increase your self-esteem and confidence, making you more attractive to other people, and making you 'choosier'. Perhaps your current partner was good enough for the old, lonely, desperate you, but now you feel you can do better. In any case, we find ourselves in a different situation to which the partner no longer passes. People also change. You and your partner will develop, and may develop into people you don't find attractive. The question arises as to whether any sexual relationship, or one in which it is expected that you have sexual lust, has a future of more than a few years. This then raises the questions of what happens to the people. Should they have had children, bought a house, and arranged their lives based on the romantic ideal that the attraction they have for each other is eternal? And if not, why is such behavior defined as positive, natural, normal, and expected of them?

The Eden of the Benobal, and the all too human Chimpanzee

It is interesting to consider the two species most closely related to humans, the chimpanzees, and the Benobals. Chimps are competitive and aggressive. The females have to be harassed into sex. They tend to run away when approached by sexually interested males. The males need to be persistent, and often violent, to get laid. This would of course mean that only the more aggressive and physically strong males would get laid, and pass on their genes. The chimpanzee population can therefore be expected to consist of aggressive and physically large males. This expectation is met when we observe chimpanzee populations.

Chimpanzee's share their territory with Apes. The apes are physically dominant, and occupy the ground, where the best sources of food are. The Chimpanzees must make do with whatever they can find in the trees, where they are conceived and live out their entire lives. The pickings are meager, and so they are forced to move around a lot in search of food. There is great competition for the limited food supply. Competitive behaviors define the social structure of the chimpanzees and their daily interactions. Selective pressures therefore operate to filter out the less aggressive and less physically strong. Only the strongest and most aggressive survive, and reproduce, passing on genes for aggressive behavioral tendencies or instincts, and physical size and strength.

The male chimpanzees are regularly violent and abuse their females. They are brutal and patriarchal. The males dominate via force. Where resources are limited, you can't share. You have to be ruthless. Only the most ruthless survive and reproduce. A documentary commentator argued that females sought to counter this by mating with all the males in the group, so that any particular male might assume that her young were his offspring, which they'd be loath to kill. This argument, however, is not necessary, and is perhaps misleading. It is logical that if males go around raping any female they can force into having sex with them that the females will end up having sex with all the aggressive males in the group. The males will recognize this, and will realize that any offspring could be their own.

The behavioral tendency of rape will be reproduced along with aggression and physical strength in males. The tendency over time will be for males to become more and more aggressive and physically large, and rapacious. Males are known to sometimes kill baby chimps. The commentator failed to explain why the males would kill only some babies, and not others. Their arguments were not consistent or coherent or complete.

Benobals, on the other hand, are the sole inhabitants of their territories. In the areas where Benobals exist, there are no longer any apes present. Benobals are therefore not constrained to life in the trees. They can take advantage of the easier and more bountiful pickings of the land. There is less competition for food. There are fewer limits to the number of offspring that the territory can support. They are peaceful and extremely consensually sexual. Females don't run off from males. Female Benobals appear to enjoy sex, and participate readily. Every form of sexual expression, from vaginal, to oral, to anal, to multi-partner, to manual, to Spanish, can be observed in the Benobal population. They practice what we would call 'sexual communism'.

Maybe this is why I have only ever once in my life even heard about Benobals. Perhaps those who control the media don't want us to see how this alternative sexual lifestyle can function. Benobal females demonstrate high levels of solidarity. They share a 'social' life. They look after the groups' children, rather than exclusively their own. It seems the Benobals have found their own Eden. It is probably much more satisfying to live the life of the Benobal than the life of the average human. If you are a Benobal, you don't have to die in some Jihad as a martyr before you get to 'get it on'.

A person's inheritance, including the general environment they inherit, either constrains and limits their pursuit and satisfaction of their desires, or actually leverages and facilitates it. In a world of plenty all you need do is pick the fruits of nature. Sexual freedom is enhanced by a lack of competition for resources. There are no limits on reproduction. Women can satisfy their lust for reproducing, which is compatible with the male's lust for casual sex. There is no need for private property.

Of course in a competitive environment defined by limits to the availability of resources it will be an exclusive privilege to get to satisfy your urges and lusts. This means that only the 'privileged' will have access to emotionally and physically satisfying resources. This in itself produces privilege per se. Privilege is derived from power, so privilege produces power. Privilege and power become institutionalized. They produce 'hierarchies' of power and privilege, and hence produce hierarchies per se. The definitions and reflexive systems of relations of the Chimpanzee reveal much about our own. Perhaps we could learn something from the Benobal.

Sexual mores as culture specific: alternative sexual cultures

Captain Cook witnessed a ceremony in which a 12 year old girl actively participated in a public sex act with an adult male. He reports that no-one in the group of natives appeared to feel any shame or self-consciousness. It was apparently a ritual act. The Polynesians routinely sent out young girls to have sex with the visiting sailors in exchange for goods. The girls sought to share the 'mana', the power, of these men that they held to be demi-gods. Having sex with them was a way of sharing in their power. Having a child by them would be sharing in this power even more so. At that time girls learned and practiced oral sex from an early age. Societies have been documented in which younger boys regularly gave oral sex to the older boys.

Gauguin, the French painter, married his 14 year old Tahitian model.

The survivors of the infamous 'mutiny on the Bounty' practiced 'consensual' pre-teen sex on Pitcairn Island for three generations before the British government took an interest in their sex lives. However in 2004 Britain extradited seven men on charges of statutory rape, independent of the fact that the girls involved had all given their 'consent'.

The Pitcairn mayor's wife stated that the island had a 'culture' of sexual interaction between adult men and girls as young as eleven. Islanders claimed that the girls had been offered money and pressured to testify against the men. One woman interviewed in a television documentary stated that a man had sought to have sex with her when she was ten, but that she had screamed and he had stopped. The Pitcairn Islander case raises our awareness of the cultural nature of sexuality. It should be noted that the statutory age of consent was not lowered on any scientific grounds, but rather as an attempt to curb the forced child prostitution that was rampant in Victorian England.

Of course the whole nature of 'consent' is problematic in interactions between children and adults. However the question the mayor's wife would raise is whether there were indeed any 'victims'. She might well argue that it is the laws themselves that are producing victims. Of course the only people who can say if there were any victims are the girls involved. In the U.S some males carry the life-long stigma of being labeled as 'sex-offenders', simply as they had consensual sex with a girl defined as 'under-age' by the legal system.

The Japanese response to 'pimping' and 'forced child prostitution' is worthy of our consideration. In Japan 'sex kiosks' operate. Anyone, from the age of 13 upwards, can hire one of these 'kiosks', which are little rooms with telephones in them. Clients then call in with requests, which the person 'working' that particular 'kiosk' can accept or decline. 'Pimping', however, is a criminal offense in Japan.

The institutions of romantic love and the family

Traditionally, the family was an economic unit. The family worked the farm or family business. Socio-economic status was directly passed on from father to son, parents to children, over generations. There was little chance of upward mobility. The Powerful had their slaves and wage slaves and value producers. These units of production had children. They became the slaves of the children of the powerful. The system of relations was stable. The system of relations were reproduced along with the means of production. These relations were further institutionalized via the church. It defined the family as a god given natural state. It defined any other form of relationships as unnatural sins against a god given order. The average participants were, in any case, drawn together by the need for mutual material, physical and psychological support.

Practical survival needs far outweighed any romantic ideals, or notions of self-realization. Only improvements in the general material wellbeing of humanity provided the opportunity for self-realization and romance. Only when basic needs are met can we even consider optimizing our life experiences.

Monogamy as optimal for everyone?

The notion of monogamy, of exclusivity of sexual and emotional relationships, has developed over a long period of time. We must consider what this exclusivity represents, in terms of reducing the supply of sexual and emotional experiences. When we define only one person as the valid recipient of all our affections and sexual desires, we deny all others our affections and sexual resources. We also place a great burden on that person to fulfill all of our desires.

This ultimately means denying some desires, of missing out on some positive experiences. The question is then whether this is optimizing behavior. We can't have everything. This is the nature of optimizing behaviors, managing the opportunities we do have. There is often a real necessity to deny some positive experiences in order to experience the best possible of all combinations of experiences available. This is optimisation. In other words monogamy may represent the optimal for some people. We shouldn't rule it out per se.

Some people do find a partners who provide them with such mutually rewarding life experiences that the sacrifice of alternatives represents little opportunity cost.

Alternatively, they gain so much from the relationship, and value exclusivity so highly, that the benefits of alternative relationships and experiences are slight in comparison. Others, however, find themselves in unrewarding relationships and then punish each other, themselves, and their children, for this misfortune. While lifelong monogamy is a beautiful ideal, it should not be defined as the natural state which everyone can and should strive for.

We must respect that some people will be so lucky as to find fulfilling relationships that grow and develop, while remaining honest and sober about our expectations for the general population. Good intentions do not guarantee good outcomes. Especially when children are involved, others end up paying the price for wishful thinking and compliance with externally imposed behavioral norms and expectations. In this way, everyone pays.

Unrequited love as the most romantic of all

Unrequited love has the greatest potential of being eternal, as it is never placed under the interrogation of reality. It can be idealized and constructed in all its potential perfection. It is never put to the test. It never has to survive the test of habituation.

Increasing the abundance of intimacy and affection

We currently experience a real lack of intimacy, trust, affection, and emotional support. By defining such qualities as the exclusive properties of a particular type of romantic relationship, we limit our potential for experiencing such affection and intimacy. By broadening our scope for giving and receiving such affection, we increase the supply of such experiences, and the likelihood that we will have the opportunity to be emotionally happy. By limiting our opportunities for giving and receiving physical and emotional affection and intimacy, we produce a level of desperation which forces actors into relationships which are not truly positive, in order to gain access to the limited supply available. By increasing our opportunities for expressing our emotional needs and satisfying them, we can avoid being forced into seeking these experiences indirectly, in sexual and relational transactions, those which are not innocent, those which are instrumental.

Where marriage and children are the only opportunity to meet sexual and emotional needs, actors will be forced into such institutional arrangements, and suffer unsatisfying relationships. This is not an optimal state. The costs are obvious to anyone who has experienced a bad relationship or broken marriage, as a partner, or as their children.

By the same token, increasing the opportunity for sexual expression outside of sexual intercourse also prevents actors entering into sexual relations with others out of desperation. Seen from this perspective, religious proscriptions against non-marriage, non-reproductive sexual expression are clearly aimed at limiting sexual expression to those interactions which serve the interests of the privileged minorities. The proscriptions are reflexive of those interests. The institution of exclusive, marriage based sexual expression reproduces the sources of value and of power by increasing the population, and keeping it dis-empowered and in need of salvation. Hand-jobs, oral-sex, and anal sex, do not lead to reproduction. This is why the Catholic Church defines rape as preferable to masturbation.

'Moral'-love hierarchy

We can identify various types of love, and describe a hierarchy in terms of 'morality'. The ideal love is the desire for someone we love to be happy, independent of what that would mean for us. This sort of love places the interests of the loved one above our own. The lover would then be prepared to suffer the loss of that person's love or affection if it were in that loved-one's interests. This is the highest, most 'moral' form of love.

Parental love is not necessarily this type of love. Parental love is often a projection of self-interests, with the child representing to the parent the potential to achieve their own unfulfilled desires, to live vicariously through their children. Moral love desires the freedom of the loved one, and asks for nothing in return. Most parents, however, demand that their children subscribe to their own values and beliefs, and emotionally blackmail their children by implying or stating that they are indebted to them for 'all they have done for them'.

In fact the parents had children to satisfy their own desires. The parents wanted to have children. Children owe their parents nothing. The parents are indebted to their children for allowing them this positive life experience. Parents owe it to their children to make their lives as rewarding as possible, for they are responsible, in so far as under determinism anyone can be considered responsible for anything, for having brought them into the world.

Non-moral love as transactional-instrumental relationships

Implicit in all non-'moral' forms of love is a transactional basis, an anticipated reciprocation, some form of benefit. This is why it is common for unreturned affections to turn into the hate of rejection and jealousy. When we are hurt by a loved one, we often want to hurt them in return, to exact revenge. The love, affection, and support we had offered them was only given with the expectation of receiving love, affection, and support in return. This is the nature of most of the relationships that we define as love. In such romantic love, we can speak of the lover as the object of affections.

Ultimately this object is a means to an ends, and the relationship is ultimately therefore instrumental in nature. An emotional state is as much an outcome experience as wealth or power are. The ends, the desires we seek to satisfy, are emotional and sexual. The person merely represents the means to those ends. 'Moral' love treats people or other sentient beings as ends in themselves.

Innocent sensuality

An innocent sexual relationship is of course one of mutual exploitation in the positive sense, of taking advantage of an opportunity for positive life experiences. This sensual love is the most transparent, simple and honest. It is synergistic as all the participants in the interaction wish to give pleasure, and all the participants receive pleasure. That this wish is driven by the fact that giving pleasure brings pleasure, does not define it as transactional. Even 'moral' love is driven by the fact that this satisfies some desire on the part of the actor to do 'good', to help someone else.

Friendship

Another form of synergistic relationship is that of honest friendship. Friendships exist because the participants gain mutual benefits from their interactions. These benefits can include understanding, company, humor, emotional support, caring, affection, and love. It is sad that we make a great distinction between 'platonic' and sexual relationships. We often limit ourselves from expressing physical affection to sexual relationships, and thereby reduce our opportunities for expressing physical affection, from giving and receiving physical, sensual warmth and intimacy. As we have discussed, this places greater stress on people to enter into bad sexual relationships out of desperation to meet these emotional needs. In the worst scenario, this leads to destructive relationships and marriages.

The sexual predator and child-free woman

The concept of 'sexual-predator' is reflexive of the positive definition of the 'father' and 'mother' and 'family man'. The family man serves the interests of State, capital, and church. He fathers offspring that will produce value for the beneficiary classes, and then works his whole life to feed and clothe them. He reproduces not only the only source of value production for the beneficiary classes, but also the social norm of 'fatherhood', and all the conventions and sets of relationships and definitions that support the hegemonic order. It is this hegemonic order which institutionalizes the benefits, the privileges and powers of the beneficiary classes, and ensures the reproduction of this system of relations and definitions.

The man who doesn't want to be a father threatens this whole system. He must be defined in a negative way to discourage others from following his example. Men who just have sex and then move on either fail to reproduce new value producers, soldiers, tax and tithe payers, and so on, or do, but don't hang around to provide for them. This means that ultimately the State will have to provide for them. What a nuisance. So the man who just wants to enjoy being a lover, to enjoy giving and receiving sexual and sensual pleasure, must be defined negatively.

The same goes for women who want to have a variety of sexual partners. This threatens the system as well, as fathers are less likely to provide for another man's children. The woman who doesn't want to become a mother at all is unthinkable. Surely she is mentally ill. Or a witch! What would the privileged do if the poor stopped reproducing?

Who the hell would produce the value that they so greedily consume? It's just unthinkable!

And just in case you think there is no precedent for a lack of 'maternal instinct', then consider the Jakarna water bird. Female Jakarna water birds kill and eat the eggs and unborn chicks that the male cares for. The male does nothing to stop her. Once she has killed and eaten all the unborn babies, she goes on to seduce the male, who obliges. I wonder how many mothers of 'blended families' have ever felt the urge.

Pornography

Pornography is an alternative form of sexual experience which does not necessarily provide value to the powerful. Pornography is an aid to masturbation, allowing sexual expression without reproduction of the source of all value, labor. In terms of optimizing sexual experience, and therefore life experience, pornography, ideally, allows the viewer to have a sexual experience at no cost to another. Pornography allows the viewer to experience and develop their fantasy. Ideally, pornography can enhance sexual relationships, and allow people to share their fantasies, and increase their sexual and sensual repertoires, their range of opportunities for positive sexual experiences with each other.

Ideally porn actors would be real life lovers.

They could 'act out' the fantasy of casual, uncomplicated, spontaneous, godless, taboo-free, hot, easy, sex. They could live out their fantasies, and enjoy fantastic sex. At very least they must have authentic sexual lust for each other. No-one should pretend. This rules out coercion of any kind. This rules out purely instrumental transactions. You can't force someone or pay someone to experience authentic lust. In this way porn would be produced at no cost to the participants. They would be rewarded for granting us the privilege of sharing their sexual experiences. No-one would be exploiting anyone else.

Transparency in emotional-sensual transactions

Alternatives to sexual experience outside of relationships reduces the desperation which often leads to actors lying in order to gain access to sexual experiences, and essentially using each other in transactions. Where all the parties involved engage in transparent transactions, then the relationship is innocent and synergistic. Where one partner promises emotional support, affection, understanding and intimacy, merely in order to satisfy their sexual needs, then the other is bound to be hurt, to develop mistrust, and to be resistant to future relationships. They will then resist entering into further relationships.

In doing so they will be reducing the universal pool of trust and the supply of opportunities for positive life experiences. This will reduce the potential supply of affection and intimacy, and the supply of sex, and therefore in both instances increase the level of desperation, and therefore the need to lie, to gain access to this, therefore, ever decreasing supply of both emotional and sexual resources. It is a vicious cycle ultimately ending in a very cold, unsatisfying experience of life.

We should therefore decouple affection, intimacy, emotional support, and love, from sex and marriage. By defining love, sex, and affection as distinct, though of course mutually compatible and mutually beneficial experiences, we can increase the opportunities for experiencing them. This requires an increase in transparency. This requires and guarantees truly informed consent.

Freedom from Hegemonic definitions of sexuality

One step on the way to freeing actors from the current hegemonic definitions and practices is to celebrate sexuality as a positive life experience in itself. It is necessary to empower social actors to experience their own sexuality positively. Many people do not control their own sexuality. Many females, for instance, have been socially 'programmed' to deny their own sexuality, to consider, for example, masturbation, to be a dirty or bad thing. Only when a person is free to enjoy their own sexuality, beginning with masturbation, can they begin to develop their true potential for positive life experience. Females have historically been taught that their sexuality should be instrumental, to producing children and satisfying their partners. This tradition has lingering after-effects. Of course some cultures and sub-cultures still maintain these traditions.

Defining marginal outcomes as essential defining properties

This is reinforced by the hegemonic definitions of women in pornography as being victims of exploitation. This is reflexively necessary, as to validate the sexual satisfaction of women in pornography would be to define them as sexual in the first place, to define them as having sexual lusts, desires, fantasies, and appetites. The most effective pornography is that in which those presented display an authentic pleasure in their roles.

The hegemonic discourses concerning pornography conventionally deny that the female actors could possibly enjoy participating in pornographic displays. They deny female sexuality and therefore must, reflexively, define pornography as a form of exploitation of women. The social rejection of pornography has traditionally driven its production underground, into the black market. This had the effect of increasing the potential for exploitation.

However exploitation is no more a necessary component or defining element of pornography than in any other business transaction or set of social relationships. Popular hegemonic discourses, of course, insist on defining particular negative elements of relationships as essential, necessary and defining, in order to discredit such relationships in toto. Why? Because they challenge the hegemonic balance of powers and systems of relations.

Such defining activities are essentially propaganda. A woman has the right to sell her services as a porn actor, or as a sex worker. To argue that she is doing so because she needs the money, and would rather not, is to play down the fact that most workers would rather not have to go to work in order to finance their desires.

Some illegal drug users lose control of their lives and become criminal. Some porn actors are exploited. Social engineering can be used to create even more exploitative societies than the ones we have. Some people will love each other forever. Some people conceived to ugly, stupid, poor, ignorant parents are beautiful, intelligent, and become wealthy and well educated. The current system does have some positive outcomes.

These anomalies, exceptions, or marginalities, however, are presented by the ruling hegemony as the essential defining properties of these relationships. Only interrogation brings the transparency which allows us to see that they are not essential defining properties. They are in fact mystifications, deliberate attempts to define things for us in ways that serve the narrow vested interests of the members of the dominant hegemonic order, the beneficiary classes, the privileged and powerful.

The infatuation of romantic love

'Frisch verliebt', infatuated lovers, intoxicated with the heady crush of romantic love, are prone to judge others interested in casual sex and so on as cheap and nasty. They believe themselves to be 'morally' superior. They define romantic love as 'morally' superior to lust. The ordinary, normal, everyday seems beneath them. They will talk about their 'spiritual' connection. This lasts as long as the infatuation. It is telling how nasty people can be to their former supposed 'soul mates'. It is telling how fast love turns to hate, resentment, and even violence. Infatuation is intoxicating, but it is temporary.

Couples who still remain together once the magic has faded, often resent the hot sex they at least imagine single people are having. They will self-righteously define them in derogatory ways. Much criticism is thinly veiled jealousy. The unhappily coupled try to turn their perceived necessity of a lust-less partnership into a virtue, by defining such relationships as 'morally' superior to serial monogamy or casual sex.

Some people have a real fear of physical intimacy. They put sex off for as long as they can. They will remain celibate until marriage, until they cannot avoid but do their marital duty. Alternatively they become nuns and priests. They are really merely redefining their fear as a 'virtue'. They will hide behind their 'moral' superiority. It is really sad. Of course Aristotle would define such extreme behavior as vice, and consider the golden mean of moderation as the true virtue.

No couple should be allowed to marry, let alone reproduce, during the infatuation stage of their relationship. Normal legal contracts aren't binding if made under duress or intoxication. Consider how many marriages are of the 'either shit or get off the potty' type, where one partner implicitly or explicitly threatens to leave the other if they can't 'commit'. And of course anyone who has been in love, knows how intoxicating it can be.

Decisions made 'under the influence' are often regretted after the return to sobriety. It apparently takes between six and thirty-six months for the 'love-drug' to wear off, and for sobriety to return. By then most couples have mortgages, financial commitments, social commitments, and the greatest commitment of all, children.

It is the children who end up paying for the decision their parents made. Often one partner has been put under duress to marry and then reproduce or lose their partner. If the marriage contract, and implicit 'child maintenance' contracts were of the conventional type, they would be considered null and void through the factors of duress and intoxication. Duress and intoxication void the foundations for 'informed consent'.

The real test of partners should be whether they enjoy each other's company doing mundane, routine things. This is true 'romance'. Take material benefits like dates, dinner, dancing, holidays, presents, and even children out of the equation, and see how many women still find their partners attractive propositions. Take out these benefits, and the sex from the relationship, which time invariably will of its own nature, and see how many couples would survive. People claim to be 'best friends' and 'soul mates', but take out the material benefits and leave behind the daily routine and the 'real' person, and see how many relationships have the potential to survive.

Men are often so desperate for physical affection and sensuality, and just plain old sex, that they will have no choice but to convince themselves, as much as their partners, that they genuinely want children, and a long term commitment. For both partners 'romantic love' is often the only 'safe haven' in an indifferent, cold, and impersonal world. When we are in love we feel 'connected' to the universe through the others' love. We feel 'welcome'. We feel the security of approval and acceptance.

It is a wonderful experience that we should savor and enjoy. However we must be careful not to 'construct' greater meaning from this experience than it warrants. If there were no costs attached to such 'constructions' then they wouldn't be problematic. They would be a way of producing even greater value from the situation. However the costs are real and great, as anyone who has been a partner in a 'failed' partnership, or worse, their children, will know.

The relationship based on fiction was and always will be doomed to fail. In fact talking about the 'failure' of a romantic relationship misses the point. The romantic relationship has its own discrete 'life'. It has a birth, growth,

decay, and death. It begins with anticipation, produces powerfully rewarding feelings of approval, acceptance, belonging, and 'unity', and then disappoints when these feelings cannot be maintained.

It is dangerous to talk of 'failure', as that implies that next-time we can succeed. This misses the point. All romantic relationships, those based on infatuation and sexual attraction, are epiphenomenal. They cannot endure. There is no way to force them to. It is not about success or failure. It is about the nature of such relationships. They are temporary. There is no way to force them to meet our longer-term needs for security. Trying to do so is counter-productive and in fact destructive. We all end up paying when we deny reality.

We should be careful not to construct too much meaning out of them, or demand too much from them. They do have their value, but it is limited. Romantic and erotic infatuation is real and great and should be fully enjoyed. It adds value to our lives. It is 'enriching'. However we shouldn't construct 'eternal' 'unconditional' love out of such epiphenomenal experiences. The optimisation of the human condition requires us to approach such things soberly. Then we can fully exploit their potential for enrichment of our lives, while avoiding the social and personal costs that denying their passing nature is bound to produce. When we try to force reality to comply with our desires for what it should be, we end up paying.

The 'romantic' marriage is an institutionalized part of the reflexive definitions and systems of relations of the dominant hegemonic order. It reproduces the dominant hegemonic order and serves the dominant hegemonic interests. It is crucial that we address this 'institution', to challenge its credentials, to interrogate its costs and benefits, and their distribution.

Marriage should be taken more seriously. Marriage contracts should be compulsory. Partners should be required to draw up legally binding marriage contracts with stipulated penalties for breaches. The process of drawing up such contracts would provide insights into the true motivations and expectations of each party to it. It would make all the implicit assumptions that each party brings to the relationship explicit.

It is often these implicit assumptions that emerge as the 'time bombs' after the initial 'honeymoon period', and destroy the partnership. Partners often act as if the other should already understand and know what they expect of each other. There is often a romantic 'wishful thinking' element to these assumptions. 'Soul mates' are expected to know what the other is thinking and so on. To demand a partner express themselves explicitly seems to challenge such sentimental, romantic notions.

What each partner expects in practical terms must be explicitly expressed and negotiated before the marriage. These expectations must cover all areas of the relationship, including the practical details of day to day living. These would include questions of finances, how often they expect to 'go out', whether they are comfortable with credit card purchases, debts, how often and how they expect to travel or go on holidays, how much time they will spend with their own friends and family, whether they want children and how many, whether and which religion they want their children to be 'dogmatized' into, whether they will attend private or public schools, and so on. The point of the negotiations is to reveal all the hidden, implicit assumptions each has made regarding the other and their future lives together, to test how realistic they are, and to negotiate to see if they are in fact actually compatible in terms of the permanent relationship marriage is meant to be.

People are often surprised to discover the person they married isn't the one they thought they were marrying. The notion that 'love can conquer all' is belied at huge expense every day in family courts across the world, and worse, privately in domestic violence and broken families. The cost of family court proceedings alone average thirty thousand dollars.

The contracts would have to specify 'damages' for 'breaches' of the contract, otherwise it is meaningless. People will be tempted to breach their agreements in all areas of life. It is human nature. For this reason we employ disincentives and incentives to motivate more desirable behavior. Marriage is no exception. If one partner believes in monogamy, and the other doesn't, then this must be negotiated.

If they agree to monogamy as the basis of their relationship, then they must specify their 'sexual' rights in terms of access to each other's sexual resources, and penalties for 'adultery'. In fact if marriage ceremonies are to

continue to imply or state monogamy, then the State should impose fines for adultery. The repercussions of broken marriages and families for the State are hugely expensive in human and financial terms. Therefore the State has a right to regulate marriages. However if one partner refuses to meet the sexual needs of the other, then they should be free to meet their needs outside the marriage.

Many people will argue that such marriage contract negotiations would reveal that most people shouldn't get married, and would result in few marriages. They would use this as an argument against such contracts and negotiations. This would reveal faults in their character and motivation, rather than any fault in the idea of the contracts.

People should enter into marriage as a meaningful contract, rather than the expression of some unrealistic romantic ideal. If broken marriages had no costs, then I'd have little interest in regulating them. However the costs are great.

Of course my Protocols contain another contract to be drawn up between the parents and the State, one specifying the rights of children and the Not-Yet-Conceived. That contract would not be negotiable, for the main referent is not in any position to negotiate on their own behalf.

Homosexuality as *the ideal*

Homosexuality would eliminate unplanned pregnancy, and therefore most motives for abortions. All reproduction would then need to be deliberate, and more likely to occur after true informed consent given. It would require deliberate planning. This would make it possible to make people more accountable for their actions, as no-one would be able to claim that conception was 'unplanned' or an 'accident'. Women would be better off with women, and men would be better off with men, as they are more sexually and emotionally compatible.

Thus, rather than demonize same sexuality, a rational society would encourage it as the ideal. Of course the beneficiary classes fear that if the only reproduction that occurred was deliberate and planned, it might become rare. Supply and demand would ensure that the wages and working conditions of the workers would improve at the expense of the privileges and benefits the beneficiary classes currently enjoy.

Sexual dissidence

We must add the teaching of hell to children to the UN convention of human rights as a form of child-abuse. When it is brought in connection with homosexuality, any form of consensual sexual interaction, or masturbation, it is exponentially more damaging to children and adults alike.

Saint Thomas Aquinas, The Medieval Catholic philosopher, defined rape as preferable to masturbation. 'Morally' masturbation was defined as the greater 'sin', as it was a 'waste' of semen. What could lead a philosopher, who empathized with the suffering of animals, and was against the sacrifice of the individual in the interests of 'the greater good', to make such an appalling argument? A U.S politician has actually gone on record admitting that laws banning homosexuality were aimed at maintaining high birth rates.

Masturbation, anal sex, hand-jobs, and homosexuality, all represent a threat to the privileged elites, the beneficiary classes, supply of industrial and cannon fodder, value producers, and markets. The hegemonic powers have historically defined any sexual act that doesn't increase the population, the source of value for the powerful, as sin. People have had their sexuality distorted, and have lost access to many of the opportunities for positive life experience that sensuality and innocent, synergistic, consensual, reciprocal, sexuality can provide.

Contraception, anal sex, and oral sex, even among married heterosexual couples, has historically been defined as sin by the church. In fact homosexuality was a crime up to 1885 in Britain. It wasn't until 1970 that some governments, for instance the Victorian and South Australian state governments, began to decriminalize homosexuality. It was not enough to define sex as 'dirty' a-la dirty thoughts, dirty weekend, and dirty old man; and as a sin. It was actually a criminal offense. It should now be clear to you why. These practices do not increase the number of value producers. They do not increase the wealth and power of the Pope and the Catholic Church. They do not increase the number of slaves, slave-wage-workers, soldiers, or consumers, which generate value and profit for the owners of capital.

Some people persecute homosexuals due to inherited religious proscriptions. It is also satisfying to feel superior to someone else. Heterosexuals can feel superior to homosexuals due to the religious demonization of homosexuality as sin. The most bigoted people are usually the ones who have no alternative opportunities to feel superior to anyone. They are usually members of the lowest socio-economic groups, or the least successful among their peers.

The right of the King to rule, the powers and privileges of the priesthood, the right of men to dominate and exploit women, the 'moral' right for humans to exploit animals and nature, and the right to rape, murder and steal from 'infidels' and 'pagans' are all dependent on the existence of god. Few will challenge that god said this or that, simply as they don't wish to challenge the existence of god in any way. If they start challenging the priests about what god did or didn't say, they might end up revealing that god is in reality a fiction made up by the kings and priests to justify their own powers and privileges. They will publicly go along with any religious 'proscription', merely to reinforce the legitimacy of the church in general, and thereby protect their own 'divine' rights to exploit others, in particular.

Some people merely welcome the chance to distract attention from their own faults. Others welcome the opportunity to express or 'vent' their self-loathing, frustration, and anger with the world, by defining someone, some group, as a 'legitimate' target for this. Some people simply go along to get along, and dare not rock the boat. Others have a healthy desire not to be crucified, burnt alive, or tortured. Better to simply not say anything or do anything that might bring on such things. They may not agree with the church, but they won't risk becoming a target themselves. They won't risk suffering 'fates worse than death' for openly expressing their dissent.

Many people reflexively misunderstand a person's desire to have their lover urinate on them. They fail to recognize the sensuality and intimacy enjoyed by the participants, and wrongfully ascribe a desire for humiliation on the part of the recipients. Whether one defines the experience as humiliation or intimate sensuality, is reflexive of an understanding of how the persons experience the event themselves. If you find the idea disgusting, then consider

this. During the reign of Henry the 8th, in Tudor England, the urine of children was added to jellies to achieve a green coloration.

An inability to validate or accept another individual's own definition of the situation, of their own subjective experience, denies many people the chance to comprehend correctly what others' behaviors represent to the actors themselves. This prevents understanding, and appropriate responses.

One of the most important concepts you will need to grasp is that of reflexivity. The meaning of anything is relational. Meaning is the relation between things. If you change the meaning of one thing, then its relationship to other things changes. Changing one assumption can change your whole belief system. If you discover that gods are myths, then the act of sacrificing virgins loses its previous sense. You will look for solutions to your problems elsewhere.

Stop using sex as a weapon

Laws which define sex under a certain age, or in the context of a particular age difference, merely provide women with just one more weapon to opportunistically abuse as it suits them. They can use this as a weapon to threaten their current partner, or to hurt their ex-partner. Women imagine their acts of violence are completely legitimate. As they say, 'all is fair in love and war'. But they complain when they are victims of 'men's' wars. When women themselves take advantage of opportunistic sex during the few moments of sexual frustration and desperation they experience, that is considered reasonable and acceptable. Women forget that men live under a sex drive that makes them desperate for sex on a daily basis.

However women have little understanding for this. When a man is sexually opportunistic or 'predatory' he is demonized. When a woman is so, on the few occasions she experiences sexual desperation, she is forgiven for her 'moment of weakness'. In fact the man she engages in sex with at this time will be blamed for having 'taken advantage' of her desperation. Further, women define men as 'losers' when they become emotional after a breakup. However when women are 'spurned', they feel justified in unleashing their disappointment and jealousy in the form of 'fury', employing any means available.

This is probably the main reason any such 'illegal' relationships ever come to public attention. Otherwise there could be no motivation for anyone to make an issue of consensual sex acts, those in which sexual desire was reciprocated, and acted on with informed consent.

Beware of medical 'facts'

150 years ago it was universally accepted as a scientific 'fact' of psychology and medicine that females were mentally inferior and incapable of decision making. The natural consequence of this was to deny them the right to vote. Even though homosexuality is no longer defined as a mental illness, same-sex relationships are still not recognized by the State.

The potential influence of the media in terms of rape

If in media, movies, and television, it appears that a man must be very aggressive and assertive, even bordering on rape, to gain access to sexual resources, then in real life men will push the envelope of their own inhibitions and be more forceful. They will overcome their own inhibitions, believing this is what women expect, even demand. It will appear that other men are successful with women as they behave in this way, and hence men may feel that they are 'losers' if they fail to behave the same.

They are also likely to resent women for acting, in public, as if they don't want men to act like this, while they secretly, in private, as it appears in the media, want men to. In any case, bringing more honesty and transparency to sexuality stands to prevent a lot of frustration, suffering, and wasted opportunities for positive life experiences.

For those who would justify rape

Rapists, attempted rapists, or those showing signs of considering it, should all be confronted with the reality of being raped themselves. They should be confronted with some physically overwhelming, unattractive, angry person who is desperate for sex with them. This will counter any of the self-righteous rage or frustration at rejection and disapproval which fuels many rapes. Once faced with the equivalent situation they would be placing their victims in, they will probably cool down and accept that rejection is a sad part of life.

Of course we should encourage pornography and masturbation to relieve sexual tensions and frustrations. Ideally the state would provide access to professional sex workers for every citizen, to eliminate the primary motivation for rape. It is a proven fact that most rapes, despite the claims of many feminists, are motivated by sexual desire. Rapists tend to employ the minimum of violence required to gain the acquiescence of their victims. Recent studies show that around 30% of men would commit rape, if they were certain of escaping any consequences. Once more, the myth of 'the noble savage' is undermined by the realities of human nature.

What the complaint 'he was only using me for sex' *really* reveals

The statement 'he was using me for sex' is really an admission that she was using sex to get what she wanted and she didn't get it. Her strategy of using sex didn't work. She is merely admitting she was using him, and is upset that she didn't get what she wanted. If she had been engaging in mutually desired sex to satisfy reciprocal sexual desires, then she was having sex because she wanted to have sex.

He could not possibly be using her for sex if she had wanted to have sex with him. So when she complains that he was using her for sex, it is like a whore complaining her client didn't pay. As the 'client' did not enter into the transaction with informed consent, the whore cannot complain that the man she had herself unilaterally defined as a client, did not pay. All the woman who exclaims 'he was using me for sex' is admitting is that she is a prostitute.

Today we refer to people who work in the sex industry as 'sex workers'. If you are a sex worker please do not be offended at my seeming to place you in the same low company as government psychiatrists, state legal counsel, or women who pretend to be sexually attracted to men in order to exploit them. I have great esteem for the sex worker. They provide real value, and deserve respect for the honest work they do.

I would never use the pejorative term prostitute to refer to sex workers. Sex workers never deliberately victimize innocent people. Sex workers never protect the privileged from natural justice. Sex workers have good and honest intentions. Sex workers provide a valuable service. It is within the sex industry that perhaps the most honest and transparent transactions take place between any two humans. The practice of seeking holy union through sex with 'sacred whores' was known as 'Hieros Gamos' or 'hierogamy', 'sacred marriage', in the ancient world.

Islamic sex workers

While on the topic of the sex industry, I would like to note an Islamic 'innovation'. Prostitution 'per se' would be a sin under Islamic law. In order to facilitate what is seen as a 'necessity', Iranian 'Mullah's have the power to officially legitimate a 'Sighe' or 'temporary marriage'. The man and woman must attend a Mullah, express their mutually desire for such a 'marriage', and on the payment of a fee, the Islamic Mullah will officially legitimate a marriage lasting as little as a few minutes, to accommodate the 'needs' of all the parties involved. In the presence of the Mullah a 'dowry', or fee for her services, is also agreed upon and paid. I find this to be a reasonable way to regulate the sex industry, to protect the rights and dignity of the sex worker, and prevent 'pimping' and so on.

Most criticism is merely envy

Lesbian and unattractive women complain about men jerking off to images of perfect women they cannot compete with. They get nasty, implying all sorts of things about the girls, denying that it is possible for some girls to be born so sexually attractive. They are simply jealous. Stop hiding your jealousy behind disingenuous 'political' arguments. Get over yourselves. And stop imposing your genetic inheritance on the not-yet-conceived.

Everyone uses their inherited power to serve their own ends. The older man takes advantage of his appeal to younger women to get what he wants. The younger woman takes advantage of her appeal to older men to get what she wants. The younger girl has sexual and sentimental power. The older man can offer security, stability, and other material benefits. Of course many younger women find older men sexually attractive in ways that other women do not understand. When the young student feels lust for their professor, there is no abuse of power occurring. What there is is a synergy.

Most criticism is merely veiled jealousy and envy. Where there is no victim, how can there be a crime? If it is a crime to have sex with someone without intending to marry them and become their slave and provider, then most men should be put in jail for most of their relations. And all women would be limited to one lover per life. Of course those who feel little chance of enjoying the benefits of passionate sexual love and infatuation, and casual uninhibited sex, with the partners they desire, would be happy to ruin the fun for everyone else. Of course those who deny themselves sexual satisfaction, don't think it is fair that others should enjoy anything they cannot or more correctly, will not.

People often avoid something for fear of the consequences. They are jealous of those who overcome their fears, and are free to enjoy these satisfactions. Thus Plato criticizes the hedonist, while portraying his own fear as a virtue. Plato imagines he is 'morally' superior, when all he is unwilling to accept the costs of seeking to satisfy his own desires.

The Nietzschean hedonist focuses on the absolute value of satisfying a desire, rather than the relative benefits compared to the potential costs. The hedonist affirms life, accepting pain as the necessary cost of the chance to experience such pleasure. They reject the criticism of a Plato as the thinly disguised jealousy, envy, as the 'ressentiment' of a person unwilling to accept these risks, these costs, as the price of pleasure. Plato would deny us all informed consent. He would decide what was good for us, based on his own preferences. Unwilling to take risks himself, he was determined to prevent others from doing so as well. Why should they have the chance to enjoy something he had denied himself? Surely that would not be fair? It is like the bureaucrat or socialist who has taken the safe bet, fearing the risks of entrepreneurship, and then desiring that those who had taken these risks, and who were successful, should not be allowed to enjoy the benefits of their hard-earned success.

Only poor men complain that women are whores, and only ugly women complain that men are 'superficial'

Only poor males, who cannot afford to pay for sex, complain that females are whores. Men who can afford to pay are glad that women will sell their sex and affection, as it means they are guaranteed access to sexual and emotional resources. In evolutionary terms it also has its advantages. It ensures that the most attractive females, representing the best genes in the gene pool, will be ensured greater chances of survival. This means that those children with the best genetic inheritance, are also more likely to enjoy the best holistic inheritance. Over millions of years this should lead to a population of the most attractive, well-adapted individuals.

The double edged sword of glorifying women

We place females on a pedestal, and not merely so that we can see up their skirts. We have 'motherly' aspirations for them. Thus we have the 'virgin Mary'. Of course earlier the mother goddess was a fertility goddess, and young girls were expected to show their devotion to her by prostituting themselves to passing strangers at the temple, and devoting the proceeds of these acts of devotion to the maintenance of the temple.

Sexuality was the virtue, rather than the later, perverse virtue of 'chastity' and 'virginity' forcibly introduced by 'The Catholic Church'. Property and power was matriarchal, so when it came to transfer of property and status, it made no difference who the father was. When property rights and royal lineage became patriarchal, the father of the child suddenly became important. To ensure that property and title proceeded along the desired path, men had to control women more, and ensure their virginity at marriage, and their sexual exclusivity.

Of course this meant men began treating women as precious objects, idolizing them 'morally' and treating them as superior. However in return for this special treatment their behavior was strictly limited. We treated them like virgin goddesses, and we expected them to behave that way. Today women still expect to be treated like princesses, while demanding complete equality with men in all things, including sexuality. They want the best of both worlds. However life does not work like that.

The costs of sexual repression

Aleister Crowley saw sexual suppression and repression as a form of violence that produced other forms of violence. In his 'Confessions' he writes: 'The battle will rage most fiercely around the question of sex... Mankind must learn that the sexual instinct is in its true nature ennobling. The shocking evils which we all deplore are principally due to the perversion produced by suppressions. The feeling that it is shameful and the sense of sin cause concealment, which is ignoble, and internal conflict which creates distortion, neurosis, and ends in explosion. We deliberately produce an abscess, and wonder why it is full of pus, why it hurts, why it bursts in stench and corruption...

The Book of the Law solves the sexual problem completely. Each individual has an absolute right to satisfy his sexual instinct as is physiologically proper for him. The one injunction is to treat all such acts as sacraments'.

Freud and Breuer revealed that all humans are by nature bi-sexual. However most people did not act out on their homosexual desires as long as their heterosexual relationships satisfied all their sexual desires. Freud discovered that all neuroses derive from repressed sexual desires. Thus expressing these desires was necessary to experience true mental health. Freud was for incomparably greater sexual freedom of expression than those of his contemporary society. He did not see monogamy as 'natural'. Read more details in 'Convergences'.

TROONATNOOR ON VIOLENCE

Violence is any act which harms another, or is intended to

Violence must be re-defined to mean any action which harms or injures anyone in any way, or which has this intention. This includes preventing justice from being served. This includes not reporting acts one has witnessed, or deliberately avoiding being such a witness. This includes harmful words as well as harmful deeds. This includes all forms of injustice, economic, legal, social, and genetic. This includes how we define things and use language.

A principled approach to individual responsibility

The world will become as you act. Act justly, and the world will become defined by justice. Employ any form of violence, and the world will become defined by violence. As you do, so shall be done unto you. Why should anyone behave any differently to you?

The difference between mass manifestations of mendacity, exploitation, oppression, and violence, and of 'petty' everyday ones, is the level of composition. Mass atrocities are merely mass expressions of everyday principles of interaction; they are extensions of everyday behaviors, rather than exceptions. Of course we prefer to think of such cases as exceptions, and like to define the perpetrators of mass atrocities as 'evil'. By defining these actions as other, and by defining these perpetrators as evil, we are defining them as 'different' to us. We are distancing ourselves and our own more mundane persecutions, conspiracies, and injustices, from theirs, and denying our own responsibility for theirs. We deny our own role in producing and reproducing history.

Not one holocaust or system of oppression would be possible without an underlying lack of 'personal' principles or ethics in the general population. It may be morally convenient for you to contend that your own personal actions can be defined in isolation, however a holistic awareness reveals that every 'personal' interaction collectively constitutes the whole which we call society. Every personal action collectively constitutes 'history'. In this way you cannot escape responsibility for the way the world is, as it is a product of how we, as individuals, go about our daily lives.

If you wish the world to be defined by honesty, fairness, justice and beauty, then you will have to behave in ways that reinforce these principles, and give up on the idea of gaining personal advantage from the opportunistic exploitation and reproduction of holistic inequality in your daily personal interactions.

The fact that George Bush was re-elected with the greatest number of presidential votes in U.S history means that we must now equate the majority of U.S citizens with the policies of his administration. Anyone who wanted to know the facts about Iraq was aware that Bush had lied about W.O.M.A.D and connections between Saddam Hussein and 911. They were also aware of the relationships between the Bush administration and the oil, gas, and defense industries. This means they have given their informed consent to the acts of U.S terrorism, and the corruption related to them. They cannot therefore claim to be innocent victims of the next attacks on the U.S. They more or less make themselves retrospectively deserving of the attacks they have suffered, if such a concept has any validity.

Definitional bias in Language

We have, as humans, and as members of particular social groupings, the tendency to seek to define everything in ways that we think either benefit us, or reflect positively on us. We tend to defend definitions which favor us, which massage our egos, which make us feel superior and righteous, worthy of approval and acceptance, and of course of the material and social benefits, status, and privileges, such definitions provide. Humans have defined the world, and their relation to it, in ways that make them the most important thing in the universe, with the right to exploit everything in it. This is known as anthropocentrism. The same principles operate whether we are considering sexism, racism, nationalism, species-ism, or religion. In every instance, dominant groups, and various other vested interests, define themselves in relation to other groups as 'morally' superior, with the right to exploit the reflexively 'inferior' groups.

The violence of language

We should be careful not to 'limit' things by 'defining' them rather than 'experiencing' them in their fullness, and recognizing and validating their full, complex, natures. When we see a 'tree' as a generalization, a concept, and not the particular tree, the unique wonder of nature, right there in front of us, we miss out on seeing the actual tree in front of us as it is, in all its individual beauty and character. We merely see some sort of 'stylized' tree-ness, rather than the actual tree that is there.

If we tell ourselves, ok, this is a 'tree', then we don't really 'look' at the tree as such. We merely ascribe it a title, and go our way. We should consider the 'Zen' Buddhist idea of letting the tree impact on us, rather than us 'defining' it. We must let it define itself.

Try standing in front of a tree and just looking in its direction, without any agenda or imperative. Just let it impact on you. Don't seek to define it or categorize it, or turn it into an 'example' of its 'type' of tree. Just meditate upon it. Look 'to' it, rather than 'at' it. Let it impact on you. You may be surprised at what you end up actually 'seeing', or more to the point, 'experiencing'. This is how to counteract the 'violence' inherent in language. Language is violent when it defines things in ways that deny the thing its uniqueness, its totality, its true and full nature. Language is violent.

Art, on the other hand, seeks to 'reveal' beauty, to express the fullness of things, their full natures. The artist seeks to convey some truth about things rather than define them. Often they paint a 'holistic' impression. Sometimes this impression is conveyed in abstract forms. They are trying to convey something of the nature of their subject, rather than reduce it to a category, to an example of some ideal type. They seek to let it speak through them, rather than impose themselves upon it.

Poetry of course uses words, but it uses them in ways which seek to convey something about the full reality of things, rather than seeking to narrowly 'define' them. The poet T.S. Elliot compares being 'defined' to being 'pinned' up on the wall like some botanic specimen. Oscar Wilde said 'to define is to limit'.

Anthropocentric, sexist, sexual orientationist, religious, and racist language can define persons in ways that limit and harm them, denying them their true and full natures, and the expression of their individuality. When you reduce a person to their skin color, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation, you violently deny them a full, complete, and complex, reality.

This language violence reinforces and promotes, and is often intended to 'justify' or 'legitimate', other forms of violence, whether perpetrated against non-humans, not-yet-humans, nature, minorities, or other socially powerless entities. Reducing someone or something to a simple single-dimensionality makes it easier for others to exploit them or it.

It is easier on our human conscience to hurt and exploit things the less like us and ours they are. Once a person ceases to be a human, like us, and becomes a Jew, or a slave, or an infidel, they cease to be like our mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters, and take on a one dimensionality that we can avoid empathizing with. The same applies to nature and animals in general.

In war we won't kill Franz the baker, father, and goal keeper of his local soccer team, but we will aim at, and aim to annihilate, the Hun. Terrorists and other soldiers don't kill people, they disable targets. When you are personally and with malice murdered, it is personal, it is a tragedy. When you are collateral damage it is impersonal and merely mathematical, statistical. Uniforms and 'body-counts' are used to de-personalize murder. Statistics are used to deny each tragedy its individual tragic character, and each victim its individual tragedy and suffering. Of course one man's 'terrorist' is another man's 'freedom fighter' or 'soldier'.

Conventional discussions on violence tend to focus exclusively on physical violence occasioning or threatening actual bodily harm. This is significant, for we tend to judge an act with consideration for mitigating circumstances, particularly provocation. We tend to forgive or understand someone who attacked another person after being strongly provoked, threatened, or actually physically attacked by them. Further, it is much easier to

identify the immediate results of physical violence, and to use this evidence to prosecute the perpetrators. This leads towards a bias against recognizing, punishing, and otherwise holding people accountable for non-physical forms of violence. Those without access to these more sophisticated forms of violence can only respond to provocation with physical forms of violence. They will appear to have acted without provocation or 'just cause'.

If we are to seek transparency and justice, then we will have to try to reveal all forms of violence, to see the events from the point of view of all the actors. The apparent victim may have provoked the attack. The act that was observed or witnessed, or for which evidence exists, may have come after a provocation that was not witnessed, or for which evidence is being withheld by observers and others with a vested interest in preventing transparency and justice from being sought.

We must also validate the fact that it is possible to harm another person through bureaucratic and legal means. It is possible to damage another person without leaving any physical evidence. Mobbing, victimization, and 'psycho-terror' can destroy a person as thoroughly as any other form of violence. At the moment no society officially recognizes workplace mobbing as a form of violence. No legal system has any plans to do so. Read 'An education in victimization' for details.

The legal justice system is experienced by many as a sophisticated form of violence. It is a weapon wielded by the privileged and powerful to victimize, to injure, to harm, and destroy innocent people. It is a shield behind which the privileged and powerful can hide from natural justice and accountability for their actions. Lawyers are the mercenary thugs of the rich and powerful. They are employed to prevent victims gaining natural justice and due process. They employ tactics and strategies with the deliberate and informed intention of attacking innocent people, and defending their guilty clients. They are prostitutes to the highest bidder.

We must recognize how powerlessness in a situation can produce an aggressive response. Desperation and frustration, and the lack of access to natural justice and legal remedies, even due process, can provoke victims of injustice into seeking remedies and relief through revenge, through the only means available to them, physical violence.

Conflict, and therefore violence, is intrinsic to social relations. Therefore the whole set of relationships that form the framework for interactions must be targeted. Inequality and powerlessness in social relations and interactions are a major determining factor in the emergence of physical violence. However the populist definition of violence can be seen to direct attention away from structural and systemic issues towards a focus on individuals, and the defining of violence as the problem of individuals. If the problem is individual, then the solution is individual. If the problem is systematic and structural, then isolating individual actors for the acts they commit will not reduce violence in the community.

An actor's ability to exercise their civil and legal rights, their right to 'natural justice', is dependent on their ability to access legal resources. These resources include information about their rights, and access to legal representation to ensure that other parties comply with the laws and respect these legal rights. Individuals able to exercise their rights to natural justice do not have to seek their own justice through revenge and physical violence. It is a natural human need to seek justice.

Actors are also more able to accept injustice when they have been given a fair hearing. Therefore we must take any complaint seriously, attempting to see it from the complainants' point of view, rather than just dismissing their issues. Smugly and complacently, or merely flippantly or dismissively rejecting complaints, is an extremely provocative act of violence in itself. Invalidating genuine experiences of injustice is a form of violence. Denying a victim the reality that they are in fact a victim is a form of violence. Denying someone reality is one of the most damaging and provocative forms of violence.

When we are dealing with people who feel they have been victimized, we must seek to comprehend their perceptions, definitions, and experience of the situation or event.

Many 'petty' complaints, when not heard respectfully, explode into escalating violence.

Nothing is petty if it is important to the inter-actors. Failing to demonstrate such respect is a form of violence, that of invalidation. It is a powerful provocation to further violence. Police will tell you that the majority of homicides begin in this way.

The violence of defining inequality as a necessity

Between 1990 and 2004 the percentage of the world's population living in absolute poverty fell from 29% to 18%. 2.5 Billion, around a quarter of the world's population, live from hand to mouth, surviving from one day to the next, totally dependent on nature. Thus they are living little different from how man lived 6000 years ago. Claims are often made that inequality is necessary. The privileged can be heard in any society, in any epoch, confidently stating that the poor have always been among us, and always will. Of course they are the ones who will produce the conditions that fulfill this self-fulfilling prophecy!

On the surface it seems that any society requires inequality to ensure that its unpleasant and unrewarding tasks get done. Even Napoleon, an atheist, endorsed the church, as he felt that inequality was necessary. Assuming this, he recognized that people needed something other-worldly to come to terms with their personal inequality, their unrewarding and unpleasant lives. Why, he reasoned, should they do the dirty work that allows the privileged to live in luxury?

The threat of hell, and the promise of heaven, motivated them to endure their lives. So, being a pragmatist, Napoleon endorsed the church, in fact making it 'official'. Napoleon made the church an official part of his 'social reality'. He knew it was a fraud. He was an atheist. But he employed the fiction to suit his own purposes. Napoleon made 'god' a legal 'reality'. I later discovered he was following a long tradition, most clearly explained by Plato in his 'Republic'. Read more in 'Religion'.

Robespierre, the 18th century French Revolution 'Citizen-Dictator', declared the official existence of a supreme being, and an eternal soul. Napoleon is said to have commented that god does not exist but religion does. He believed that without god, people would not put up with their under-privilege. They needed faith in 'justice and reward' in the afterlife to put up with this life. Napoleon lived in absolute luxury and privilege. He defined inequality as necessary. To him it was therefore necessary that people believe in god and an afterlife, so that they would endure their exploitation, the source of all his privileges, luxuries, and powers.

Napoleon decreed that the French state should support the Vatican financially, recognizing the services the Catholic Church provided him and his ruling elite with a 'quid pro quo'. This support was maintained until the French State eventually declared a separation of church and state. France today has the highest number self-professed atheists of any Western country. It has the most supportive welfare state of any country in the world.

It is true that some tasks are more pleasant and intrinsically satisfying and rewarding than others. However the intrinsic nature of any particular task is ultimately less deterministic than the context within which the task is carried out. The design of tasks, the way in which tasks are organized, and the employment conditions attached to the tasks, including pay, occupational health and safety, and status, will all have a greater impact on the experience of carrying out the task than the intrinsic nature of the task itself. Thus all tasks could be re-engineered to be relatively rewarding and positive experiences.

If everyone had an equal chance of having to perform any task in society, then those with creative, technical, and organizational talents would apply them to re-engineering such tasks, and thus positively transforming the tasks, and at the same time, society.

Further, many personally destructive tasks would be totally eliminated in a society engineered with regard to the interests of 'every' participant and externality. Many products and services are not necessary, and would not exist in a world where everyone's interests were considered. The personal costs borne by workers engaged in the processes required to manufacture some products and provide some services would not be accepted in a society where everyone's interests, including those workers employed in those processes, and animals, were considered.

Under the current hegemony, the main referents in cost-benefit analyses, that is, those whose interests are considered, are the privileged beneficiaries. If it is good for the beneficiaries, then it will be defined as good. It is of course the underprivileged who suffer the negative consequences, who pay the costs. They are not, however, referents in cost-benefit analyses. Their interests are not considered.

When the privileged are forced to implement occupational health and safety measures, they may make a virtue of necessity. However they only do the minimum they have to. No matter what degree of regulation governments seek to impose, the point is that the privileged owners of businesses are not motivated by an interest in their employees, by a 'moral' impulse, but by purely narrow self-interest. They do what they have to, and what they can get away with.

Their victims would behave no differently. The victims are no better than the perpetrators. The underprivileged victims behave no more or less principledly than the privileged exploiters do. Everyone considers the interests of themselves and theirs, and not the interests of 'others'. The same workers who define themselves as innocent victims are opportunistic in actively and passively benefiting from the exploitation of workers in other industries, nations, and, most of all, animals.

Few people who are aware of the nature of 'humanity' end up with much compassion for it. Most, like Napoleon, Hitler, Caligula, even John Lennon, and all the psychopaths like those we see portrayed in Hollywood films, end up despising 'humanity' in general. This is why most dictators and psychopaths end up losing all empathy for their 'victims'.

We are all responsible for horrific brutality, torture, murder, and exploitation. Sometimes these victims are the populations of less developed nations, our politically defined 'enemies', or our own less privileged socio-economic groups. However the victims of our most horrific, systematic, industrial scale abuse, torture, and exploitation are the most vulnerable members of our world, those least able to defend themselves, animals.

I would be hard pressed to put forward a defense of humanity on 'moral' grounds. The holocausts, Jewish and Nazi combined, pale in comparison to the holocaust we have committed against the animals we share this earth with.

Before we get self-righteous, focusing on our own status as victims, and our supposed 'innocence', we must ask ourselves whether we ourselves behave any differently to those who exploit their power over us. Whose interests do we consider when we calculate the costs and benefits of our behaviors?

As we will discuss later, the Welfare State itself came about, not in the interests of the unemployed or the underprivileged, but in the interests of the dominant hegemonic interests, as a means to defending the narrow vested interests of the dominant hegemonic order and its privileged elites.

The definition of inequality as a state of nature, at worst a necessity, at best a virtue, is a supreme example of hegemony. That it is conventional wisdom attests to the power of hegemony, which is to 'naturalize' assumptions and belief systems. They get taken for granted. These belief systems operate in the interests of the powerful, at the expense of the marginalized, dis-empowered and exploited.

The unlucky are taught to define the exploitative system and their position and experience in it in ways that serve the interests of the privileged and powerful. They learn that they are themselves to blame for their lack of privileges. If only they would work harder, and play the game more enthusiastically, aggressively, 'harder', they too could be enjoying all the benefits and privileges that the privileged beneficiaries have earned. This defines the hegemonic illusion of 'meritocracy'.

Definitions of inequality as necessary are hegemonic, and not merely actively constructed by actors with vested interests. In fact those who benefit from the definitions are not necessarily aware that the definitions are problematic. They may take them as much for granted as everyone else. The myth is so 'embedded' in the culture that it attracts no attention. Any public interrogation is lightly dismissed as 'utopianism'. Further, those that fail to 'recognize' the wisdom of conventional wisdom, and dare to articulate dissent, are often defined as ignorant or stupid, or worse, as mentally ill.

Most psychiatrists are just as ignorant about reality as everyone else. They are often not even aware that they are prostituting themselves, that they are accepting payment to victimize their 'patients'. Other who are aware, but cynical, what they would define as 'realists', are happy to prostitute themselves to the highest bidder. They didn't

become doctors to ease suffering. They became doctors because it seemed the most lucrative job available to them at the time. In this context, whoever pays the psychiatrist gets to define who is sane and who is mentally ill.

Psychiatrists have taken over the role of the 'inquisitor', in victimizing those who challenged the dominant hegemonic definitions and relations, and the beneficiaries' definitions of themselves. Most people will readily 'admit' to being sick, and allow the doctor to claim to have 'cured' them, rather than continue fighting for a validation of reality. They will comply with the hegemonic social reality, to avoid further 'torture'.

Hegemonic violence and its 'expressions'

The popular myth of meritocracy represents an intrinsic violence built into the dominant hegemonic systems of defining and relating. Those who are being oppressed and exploited are defined as responsible for their own suffering. It is no wonder that it is such people who make up the majority of official statistics of violence, especially physical violence. Such violence in our society is ultimately the expression of more ubiquitous and insidious violence which is defined within the hegemonic system of relations as natural, normal, and meritocratic. Physical violence is the expression of other forms of violence. What comes in must be expressed, must come out, in one form or other.

Actors denied access to natural justice through legal and 'legitimate' means, through a public addressing of their grievances, and a due process which is transparent and rigorous, have no alternative but to 'express' their victimization, to get it out of their systems, by more physical means.

Denied the right to pursue justice by 'legitimate' means, they are forced to take action outside the system. This violence takes the form of everyday violence, to others and the self. It includes spousal and child abuse, self-abuse with drugs, vandalism, sabotage, poor motivation, and a culture of violence. Actors who are denied the reality of what they have suffered, may experience various forms of schizophrenia including depression, self-mutilation, psychoses, neurotic disorders, and acting out.

Judging acts Vs actors, and articulating hegemonic violence

We have to learn to judge the act, and not the actor. The act is merely the expression of a ubiquitous level of violence in our society. If we wish to reduce this expression, we must reduce the ubiquitous background level of violence. The expression is the propergent of interactions for which the actors cannot be held accountable.

We must first 'include' everyone within our community, including those who have been rejected, excluded. We must disapprove of the true violence of injustice and oppression, and define the true perpetrators of violence. We must see the lower level actors as victims of this system, to empathize with them. We must judge all acts of violence as unacceptable, and interrogate the basic hegemonic background violence. We have to avoid the selective hegemonic focus on the violence that emerges from and as a product of this ever-present hegemonic background violence.

Of course if you feel bad about yourself you will welcome the opportunity to feel superior to someone, to express your self-loathing by vehemently judging and despising others. This opportunity is provided by the hegemonic ways of defining, and the relations that they produce, 'legitimate', and reproduce. In this case you can feel better than the criminal in jail.

Most people will be loath to accept that the only difference between themselves and those that are rotting in prison is the circumstances of their lives. But this is a demonstrable fact. People should at least be selfishly motivated by the knowledge that prisons cost much more than luxury resorts do. It is the average worker who pays to have people excluded from society.

The experience of incarceration is not productive. As Oscar Wild wrote: 'Vile deeds like poison weeds bloom well in prison air, it is only what is good in man, that wastes and withers there.' People do not come out better people than they went in. They have had even more violence perpetrated against them. They have been defined as unworthy of participation in the community.

The taxpayer has wasted huge amounts of money on a destructive system that punishes the true victims of society even further, and makes them even more likely to express even greater violence. That money could have been spent on producing real value, justice, and opportunities.

When China killed a convicted British drug smuggler, consistent with its local laws, it was criticized as having killed a 'mentally ill' person. People are so inconsistent when it comes to 'punishing' crimes, appealing to all sorts of notions of 'diminished capacity', 'crimes of passion', and 'mental illness', while denying determinism and the absence of free will in principle. Thus they miss the point that all punishment is, in the context of determinism and the absence of free will, unjust.

Road rage is one expression of the fundamental culture of violence in our society. It is a further expression of the violence done to people on a mundane, domestic level. It is one form of expression of violence, one way in which it is processed by the organism, one way in which what has been forced in, finds its way out. Of course the expression of violence is often 'consumed' by others, who then, in an iterative and seemingly unbreakable spiral and cycle of violence, 'express' and 're-produce' this violence. Violence breeds violence.

The problem is that mystification prevents us from identifying and eliminating the base and fundamental violence that is perpetrated and perpetuated in our popular culture. All practices and relationships reflect and construct the underlying culture, the way in which things are defined. Remember that culture is fundamentally constituted of the meanings and definitions current in a community.

We can no longer afford poverty

Half of humanity are today living on less than 2 U.S dollars a day. These poor people are destroying their eco-systems merely to survive. They are cutting and burning rain-forest. The soils are fragile. Once they deplete them, they must keep moving ever deeper into the forest. The factories in many countries pump out untreated toxic waste. Sewage systems pump out untreated sewage into the World's Rivers and oceans. Soils are depleted and over-farmed. Water supplies are exhausted. Many poor countries have cut down every single tree simply to burn as fuel. We can no longer afford such poverty. Millions of economic refugees are on the move. In the future wars will be fought over water and other natural resources.

Already today one in six people have no access to drinking water, electricity, or sanitation. One billion people go to bed hungry every night. The world's population has tripled since 1950. 50% of the world's population live in resource rich nations. 2% of the world's population own 50% of the world's wealth. This is a recipe for political instability, war, and mass movements of desperate refugees.

The U.N says that the absolute level of hunger is still increasing, just at lower rate. The so-called 'Green revolution' resulted in increased yields for crops, but at the same time the population has increased. The increasing world population will require a 75% increase in food production by 2050. The availability of water is also decreasing, as the price of fertilizers are increasing, and their availability is decreasing. The U.N has also expressed fears that climate change will pose a threat to food production.

The violence of unemployment

One of the greatest ways in which we make ourselves valuable to others, and therefore generate feelings of security, of being valued, accepted, and approved of, is through the agency of work. This is one reason why unemployment can have such a devastating impact on a person's self-esteem, on their self-evaluation of how others do or should value them. Work can also be considered to be the holiest of all things. Through the agency of work we are allowed to make a contribution to the wellbeing of others. Work is what truly binds (re: religiare re: religion) people together. Through work people can contribute to the wellbeing of their family and community.

This awareness should make us recognize the violence that is done to a person by denying them the right to make a contribution, to secure the approval and acceptance and positive valuation of their community, to secure a secure place in their world. Denying someone employment is an act of violence. Everyone has the right to secure a secure place in their world by being allowed to make a contribution to it that is valued by it. This is why work for the dole schemes are also a form of violence, as they are not real work as such. It is in fact slave work. If work needs to be done, and the community values what needs to be done, then they will value the efforts of those who carry out that work, who make that contribution. They will pay them the market rate.

Governments around the world currently exploit the unemployment that they produce, by getting work done by people and not paying them market rates for their work. In other words it has produced inequality and is now opportunistically exploiting it to get things done cheaply, at the expense of those that it has rendered unemployed through its economic and social policies. People are being denied the right to secure security for themselves. More than that, they are being denied the right to make a recognized contribution to their world. This denial would be seen as the greatest sin by a Hindu. Unemployment can really destroy a person's sense of self-esteem. The disapproval, rejection and abandonment experienced by the unemployed are real.

A nurse in Germany actually expressed her 'understanding' of why my neighbor, ironically a pensioner himself, and an emigrant from what was then an extremely poor country, might punch me in the head, stating that in those parts everyone would feel the same at seeing a young healthy man managing to remain unemployed. In Australia the term 'dole bludger' was used to express disapproval and rejection of the unemployed, blaming them for the government's unwillingness to produce employment in the economy. In fact the unemployed are essentially abandoned by society, being left in poverty and disadvantage. To add to this misery, they are forced to approach employers when the government itself says there are no jobs. In fact what the policy is designed to do is to force people into taking exploitative casual work with sub-standard pay, conditions and occupational health and safety standards.

I once overheard a case manager, at an office contracted by the government into forcing people into applying for exploitative jobs, tell a young man to ignore the safety hazards he had experienced at his newly found casual work place. The case manager was only interested in the bonus she would receive for having taken someone off unemployment benefits. She had no concern for the young man's safety. Just prior to this a young man had died in a work place accident due to substandard safety at a work site. The unions were rightly calling for the managers of work-sites to be made legally culpable for accidents that occurred due to their negligence. The case manager told him just to keep quiet, as he was casual and would be the first to go if he made any trouble. I was appalled. I hope you are.

The system has been so set up to make employers aware that there are people who the government were forcing to take any work that was offered to them. Of course many employers would take advantage of that by offering work conditions and pay that no-one else would take. They knew that the applicants, who had been clearly identified by 'Center-link' and their crony sub-contractors, had no choice but to accept any job, or fall into absolute poverty. The government, through their hired goons, are identifying the most vulnerable members of society so that employers can opportunistically take advantage of them.

Conservative governments directly represent the interests of the employers. They produce and exploit unemployment to keep wages and working conditions low. They also have other motives. The plight of the

unemployed is a ubiquitous and insidious threat to anyone with a job to keep their mouths shut, their eyes and ears closed, and keep any grievances they have to themselves. People are made to fear becoming unemployed, as a means to keeping them dis-empowered and manageable. They will not risk complaining about working conditions, sexual harassment, or injustice, for fear of losing their jobs.

Unemployment benefits are extremely important to helping keep employers and bosses more honest. One commentator referred to dole payments as 'stuff-it' money. In other words, in the worst case scenario, the worst an employee faces is unemployment benefits rather than absolute poverty, and so they can afford to tell a boss to stuff-it. This forces bosses to treat their employees with at least a modicum of respect and equality.

It is one of the sins of capitalism that it objectifies people as means to increasing the return on capital. It is a form of blasphemy. The desire to contribute is a holy impulse. It is the sacred expression of the desire to serve, to contribute to the community they are ideally a part of, and therefore whole with. Work binds people together into a whole. Capitalism turns this holy acts into a means to external, exploitative ends. It takes a holy, unifying, sacred act and turns it into an alienating meaningless action. Alienation is the opposite of making whole and meaningful. When our work is a sacred offering, it has meaning and nobility, no matter whether it be sweeping a path or heart surgery. Zen Buddhism sees all work as being of the same noble and sacred character, as does Hinduism. Marx and Engels noted how work had become totally separated from its noble character, from its nurturing meaning. Under capitalism workers were totally alienated from the meaning of their work.

On a production line workers carry out tasks which have no intrinsic meaning. They often do not even know what they are working on. They often don't get to see the final 'product', let alone consume it themselves. On top of that they are disapproved of and rejected by their societies, and excluded from most of the benefits of their labor, from most of the privileges of their society. They are placed at the bottom of the social hierarchy, rejected by the society in general.

They are also denied the knowledge that they actually belong to a 'class', the working class, and denied the right to comprehend what is happening to them, to make sense and meaning of their lives. They are blamed for all the problems they have, and the lack of opportunities made available to them. They are exploited as sub-human machines, as means to other's ends. They are denied the knowledge that this is systemic, that these problems are a direct result of the lives imposed on them,

Workers are exploited and denied an understanding of the nature of their situation. They are made to blame themselves for things that others are responsible for. They are taught that their 'betters' are better, and deserve to have their privileges, just as the worker and unemployed deserve their miserable lot. Those with the privilege of good inheritances of money, education, intelligence, talent, or beauty, take advantage of this to accumulate rewards, privileges, wealth and status, for themselves and theirs.

All value must be produced by work. Anyone who receives more than another does so at a cost to the others. In principle the owner of the luxury car has legally stolen it from the workers who produced it. No-one in and of themselves can produce millions of dollars of value. Others produce it, and they merely take it. Under the system of relations and institutions reflecting these, this theft is actually defined as accepting what is being given.

The doctor *accepts* their pay, they don't *take* it. The investor *accepts* the return they receive, are *given*, are 'distributed'. The motto is take what you can get. You get what you've been given! In reality it is accepting stolen goods. The 'weasel-word' or 'euphemism' for this is 'appropriating surplus value'.

When the owners of one or other form of capital, whether money, talent, beauty, skill, or knowledge, accept money for it, and buy luxurious cars and houses, and then 'invest' it and get even more money for doing nothing, they are applauded and admired, approved, respected, and valued. When a poor worker steals a luxury car they are disapproved of, rejected, abandoned to prison where they are totally excluded from their society, and any hope of earning approval and gaining security. Ironically, the worst of these are called maximum security prisons.

They have in fact merely appropriated value that someone else has produced, for themselves. In principle they have done exactly the same thing that the talented stockbroker did. Only under the institutionalized sets of

relations, which determine how things and acts will be defined and responded to, one person gets to savor the full security of approval and luxury, and the other gets maximum security.

The violence of systematically denying particular groups the right to acceptance, approval, and ultimately, security

The lowest Socio-economic-status (SES) groups have historically been, and continue to be, systematically denied the right to earn approval, acceptance, and a sense of security. One of the main institutionalizations of this violence is the Public Education System. The education system 'teaches' lower SES children that they are inadequate, that they have little to contribute to their community, and as such are not worthy of approval. This of is course intended to teleologically 'legitimate' their lack of social rewards, their low SES, their lack of privileges and opportunities, and to justify the education system itself. The hegemonic powers can point to the poor educational performance of lower SES groups to justify investing little in their education, offering them fewer opportunities, and then denying them participation in the discourses affecting them. They can justify inequality as 'meritocratic'.

Remember that particular definitions are mutually reflexive of particular systems of relations. In this case the system of relations is that of 'vertical equity', treating unequals unequally, which is defined as 'meritocratic' within the dominant hegemonic social reality.

Once the victims of the system have internalized the definitions, they will reflexively accept the system of relations, the opportunistic exploitation of inherited inequality, as legitimate. Everything is reflexive and reiterative, and will be reproduced by each successive generation, becoming more and more 'naturalized', 'normal' and taken for granted. It will be accepted as part of 'the best of all possible worlds'. In this way history is constantly re-produced.

We can only escape the loops of history by not reproducing the definitions we inherit. We must replace the dominant hegemonic definitions with ones reflexive of more optimal systems of relations, ones that can deliver lives worth living to every participant. The current systems will lose their legitimacy, and new ones reflexive of principles of real universal justice and principled decision making will have the chance of emerging.

The current 'education' system systematically destroys the lower SES group's member's sense of self-worth so that they will accept exploitation, and consider themselves responsible for their own problems. This is the true 'education' the system wants them to have. These are the definitions the dominant hegemonic interests wish to have 'internalized', naturalized, and normalized. As long as they can read and write and follow operating instructions their employers can exploit them. If they get too clever, they might get too hard to 'manage', that is, manipulate and exploit.

This is how 'meritocracy' and 'horizontal equity' is constructed and naturalized. The children of the higher SES groups systematically learn that they are worthy of approval, privilege, and opportunities.

The students of the least resourced public schools, where the lowest SES children are sent, are taught to feel inadequate in many ways. They are not deserving of resources such as textbooks and white-boards. They are given the least experienced and least competent teachers, ones that couldn't find jobs in the 'better' schools. Principals are so desperate for staff that they employ them under false pretenses and force them to teach subjects they are not qualified or competent to teach.

The government education systems are fully corrupt, and will do nothing about this situation. They will violently victimize any teacher who blows the whistle on this situation. They will destroy their credibility and assassinate their character. They will ruin them. This is all documented in David Lowe Consulting's independent report on Health Quest.

Students in poorly managed public schools are taught by teachers not qualified or competent to teach the particular subjects they are forced to. They have the least experienced and capable teachers. They are taught by casual, 'relief' teachers for a disproportionately high proportion of their total schooling. Many days are completely chaotic and unproductive. In fact the students learn to have no respect for education or teachers in general. They are right to treat school as a sad 'joke'.

Their school buildings and environments are dilapidated. They are taught that they are not worthy of real classrooms and a positive learning environment. Their teachers are overwhelmed by a system designed to overwhelm them. They are forced to follow curriculum that do not suit the needs or interests of their students. They are frustrated at every move, and show this frustration. They are overwhelmed by the situation. They resent their situation. The stress is overwhelming. There is no discipline in the classroom. The teachers are often sick and casual, aptly named 'relief' teachers are brought in to 'baby-sit'. There is little continuation of staff or teaching.

The children are exposed to systematic violence at all levels. They of course express this violence in physical acts of violence against others, against other's property, and against themselves. They have been deliberately forced into a culture of violence. They will, however, be labeled as perpetrators rather than victims. They will be blamed for their situation, and in this way taught that they are only worthy of victimization, of exploitation, of disapproval and rejection. They have been manufactured, produced, and socialized into being factory fodder and a casualized work force. They will have been taught that they don't deserve better

It is no wonder that they disproportionately become involved in self destructive behavior including all forms of drug abuse, prostitution, and petty 'crime', and fail to look after themselves. They have been deliberately broken. You can hear it in their voices, their often whiny, monotonous, shrieking voices, which express their loss of hope, patience, and anticipation of anything good ever coming to them. You can hear how they feel about themselves, how they have given up. Their voices are full of self-loathing and a lack of positive expectations.

Under such conditions, it is no wonder that they fail, or achieve poor grades. These failures teach the students that they are in fact failures themselves. They are blamed for the situation they have inherited, and 'act out', that is, they respond predictably badly to it.

Overstressed teachers and 'management' yell at them, and make nasty and derisive comments to their faces and behind their backs. Unless you have experienced the stress of teaching at such schools you have no right to be overly judgmental of them. Of course teachers are adults and should behave professionally, but there are limits to what a human being can endure without 'cracking'.

And even worse, the education system actively attacks any teacher who tries to address this situation. Merely challenging the situation is enough to get them fired, labeled 'unfit', unable to function as part of a team', and ultimately 'blacklisted'. I personally take the accusation leveled against me as 'unable to function as part of a team' as a badge of honor. It is like being told by the SS that you don't 'fit in' with the Nazi system.

By 'function as part of a team' my accusers meant 'acquiesce, go along to get along, comply, submit, collude, pretend, deny, lie, deceive, 'see no evil, hear no evil, and certainly speak no evil. It was the equivalent of being criticized by the 'Vichy' government that colluded with the criminal Nazi regime in occupied France. There is a war raging in these schools and their communities. They are being occupied by a criminal government regime. If no-one actively 'resists', then the regime will continue its violence unabated.

I would not collude. I don't want to be accepted and approved of by such people. Their acceptance and approval would be a mark of my failure to act according to correct principles. Of course they are allied to the dominant hegemonic interests, and so I was more or less rejected and abandoned by the society I was dependent upon. Of course the price of integrity is high. But the price of dis-integration may be even higher, even if being denied the acceptance, approval, and security of my community will end up, as Dr Ornish demonstrated, killing me. I have identified my 'murderers in my web pages on mobbing and 'people', if anyone ever wants to prosecute my case.

All it would take is for every teacher to not reproduce the system, and the war would be won. A new system reflexive of definitions reflexive of principles of universal justice would then be free to emerge. Oh glory day!

The education system commits the most violent and heinous crime upon the children entrusted to their care. It is noteworthy that parents are coerced into doing this. The most damaging education is the 'compulsory' education that parents are legally forced to submit their children to. This 'compulsory' education teaches their children that they have no contribution to make, that their sacred gifts are worthless. They are excluded from making valued contributions to their community. They are therefore effectively rejected and abandoned by it. This

is one of the greatest acts of violence perpetrated on humans by the state education systems, and the dominant hegemonic interests they are reflexive and iterative of.

The public relations people for the state education system will firstly try their luck and claim that this is not true. When they are faced with overwhelming and undeniable proof, due to the work of 'whistle-blowers', that it is in fact true, they will seek to redefine the nature of this reality. They will blame the families for their children's condition and situation. They admit there are problems but the problems lie elsewhere, that is, they are not the problems of the education system. So, ultimately, 'there are no problems' with the system itself. No-one in the system will be held responsible, and therefore none of them will be held accountable! The responsibility and therefore accountability lies elsewhere.

The truth within this lie, that there are immense social problems in many of the communities from which students are drawn, is enough for most people to validate the education departments 'spin doctoring' 'in Toto'. The fact remains, however, that there are superior ways of dealing with the problems the education system faces, and these are never sought out, let alone 'tested'.

Anyone who does suggest that there might be superior, feasible alternatives to the current system is victimized for even daring to question the competence or motivations of the department's management, its 'dominant hegemonic vested interests'.

Even more frustrating than this is these managers own apparent blindness to their own incompetence and lack of principles. They appear to have convinced themselves that they are managing in 'the best of all possible' ways. Their self-deception and capacity for denial are amazing. It is sickening and terrifying. However I guess it is human nature.

The private schools have no problem with installing video cameras in the classrooms. They see the potential for providing teachers with feedback. It also provides transparency, in the event that reality is disputed. The public sector teachers unions are vehemently opposed to the introduction of video cameras. I made the suggestion over 5 years before some private schools introduced them. The public school system's managers and teachers alike are terrified of transparency.

Many schools would be facing class action lawsuits. The videos would document the problems that management pretend don't exist. They would no longer be able to so smugly, complacently, conveniently, selfishly, and frustratingly deny the facts. They would be held responsible, and ultimately someone would be held accountable. These people would have to admit they are not competent or capable of resolving the issues and finding and implementing the necessary creative and innovative solutions. They would have to allow people who could do so the opportunity to.

Parents of public school students were usually victims of the same system that is victimizing their children. That itself demonstrates how systematically generational the violence is. It is one reason why these same parents accept what is being done to their own children. They have Internalized, naturalized, and normalized the dominant hegemonic reflexive sets of definitions and systems of relations. They were 'conditioned' by their 'education in unworthiness' they suffered during their own 'compulsory' schooling.

Of course, when forced to admit the failure of the system, rather than their system, the managers of the education system will claim that the system is not responsible for these 'unfortunate' circumstances, for these sad consequences. They will point to the fact that such unfortunate circumstances are part of the human condition, that nothing can be done about it, despite the best intentions. They will say, 'the poor have always been with us', and fail to see that this merely highlights how systematic the violence against the lowest SES groups is, and has always been.

It is ironic how you can use levels of composition to transform obvious guilt into innocence, if you are quick enough, and your interlocutors fail to interrogate your specious sophistry. You can point to a tradition of mismanagement to deny accountability for your continuance of that tradition of self-serving, bumbling, incompetence. As such, bumbling, incompetent mismanagement becomes the norm, the standard, the benchmark

even, in fact the human condition, the natural and normal state of things. Management can be proud in being the upholders of tradition!

In John 12.8, Judas Iscariot questions why Jesus has one year's wages worth of 'spikenard' ointment rubbed on his feet, which is then wiped off with a woman's hair. Judas thinks the money should have been spent helping the poor. Jesus responds with that famous line that has been reiterated by the Republicans of this world ever since. 'For the poor always ye have with you'.

A Russian resource manager managed to 'create' 8 Billion dollars of wealth inside a few years, between the collapse of the former U.S.S.R and today. A young child has 'earned' being conceived into, and being forced to live in, a culture of violence, exploitation, and virtually zero opportunity. This is what the dominant hegemonic interests will have you believe, and which their dominant hegemonic definitions have had you 'internalize' and accept as 'natural' and 'normal', as 'the best of all possible worlds'. This is 'meritocracy', and 'horizontal equity' in the field, in action. The 'news' will show the latest swim-wear collection of the latest sporting hero. Real violence, including injustice, is not news. Denying these realities their place in the media, in the news, in the public awareness, is an act of violence in itself.

Female genital mutilation

There is apparently a 5000 year tradition of genital mutilation, what is euphemistically referred to as 'female circumcision' in Africa. Apparently it is the mothers who often arrange for this to take place while their husbands are away, against his wishes. This practice was a Sumi tradition before Mohamed. Thus while it is not directly related to Islam, it is today now part of so-called 'Sharia' law. Imams, the Islamic priests, claim that the prophet Mohamed commanded all faithful Muslims to female genital mutilation. While there is no reference to this in the 'Koran', Mohamed did adopt the Jewish practice, which they in turn adopted from the Egyptians, of male circumcision.

I recall watching a group of Imams on television, smiling smugly and complacently into the cameras while young girls detailed the horrific suffering they experienced during genital mutilation, and the consequences they have suffered and continue to endure. Some had the dignity to cover their smiles with their hands.

Pre-teen girls are genitally-mutilated so badly that they can barely urinate for the rest of their lives. One traumatic consequence of this is the formation of urine-stones. As part of the mutilation the clitoris is completely removed, and the vaginal opening cut and then re-sown. It is often impossible for their husbands to penetrate them. Fearing that their 'manliness' might come into question, they are loathe to request surgical assistance. Instead they inflict further terrible injuries on their wives by forcing penetration with the aid of razors, wood, or whatever alternative object lends itself to that task. Another horrific consequence the victims of this practice face is the inability to give birth naturally.

A recent private German initiative was successful in getting many Imams to agree to preach that such genital mutilation was against Islam, and the Koran. This initiative produced 'The golden book' which would be made available to every Muslim. This document clarified the position of Mohamed and the Koran Vis a Vis female genital mutilation. While male circumcision is not so horrific, it is still a form of genital mutilation, and of violence. Referring to cultural relativity, many still defend both practices.

Charities promoting sexism, and violence

Sexism is a prevalent form of violence. Sexism defines a person narrowly. It limits their opportunities for authenticity. It limits their opportunities generally. It is like a cage or prison that constrains and limits. A currently running Christmas campaign concentrates exclusively on little girls. Of course the people who run the ads recognize the conventional sexist discrimination and defining practices. They deliberately appeal to them in their marketing.

We are taught to see little girls in a more sentimental light, and to be more emotionally sensitive to their suffering. Little boys have to be strong. We are taught that little boys aren't as sensitive and don't have the same needs, and therefore rights, as little girls. This plays out of course in the terribly sexist notion that it is more acceptable to kill men than women, or children, and the 'moral' imperative of 'Women and children first'!

Other people within the same organization also complained in the media that the charity was receiving mostly presents for girls, and that they had too few presents to hand out to the boys. Their organization itself, through its marketing campaigns, were perpetuating this sad fact. In the process they are reproducing and promoting sexist views of boys as having fewer emotional needs, and being less deserving of emotional resources, and resources in general. We are taught to be sensitive exclusively to little girls, and females.

This is a form of violence. It is 'expressed' by boys and men in other forms of violence. Males are taught that their feelings are not as important as those of females. They are taught not to express their emotional needs. These needs are then of course expressed in frustrated acts and behaviors. Women later in life complain that the men in their lives aren't interested in feelings, in the woman's, feelings of course!. They aren't even aware of this, or that there is anything wrong with it. They have been taught that the feelings of men are not important.

Men are taught not to value feelings, to focus on action, on solving technical problems. Unfortunately our most fundamental problems have arisen due to the lack of attention paid to our basic fundamental emotional needs. This has arisen as the privileged wanted hard, tough, object-orientated men, in fact 'objects' per se, means to ends, to their ends; to fight their wars, and to whip their slaves, and to do their dirty work. Women wanted a man to provide them with material security. The man was expected to entertain them, to 'wine and dine' them, as a form of 'foreplay' or 'seduction'. Men were expected to support them and allow them to meet their emotional needs for children, and families. The women in return send them off to war to fight and be maimed and killed.

Women, and the privileged and powerful, didn't really want men to have real emotions and feelings. They had a monopoly on these for themselves, and this helped the privileged define themselves as 'morally' superior to the general population, and for women to define themselves as 'morally' superior to men. It is easier on the conscience to exploit 'morally inferior' people or animals. They also got the men to do all the morally questionable things. This teleologically legitimated the definitions of men as less moral in the first place, thereby justifying giving them the more morally questionable, brutish, aggressive, and so on, tasks; tasks which they must be 'desensitized' in order to accomplish, and during which they are further de-sensitized.

Of course it is a teleologically self-justifying, self-fulfilling prophecy. It is a particular case of a set of reflexive definitions (of general male working class moral inferiority) and systems of relations (assigning men the 'morally' questionable and dehumanizing tasks) reiterating and reinforcing each other. The men become more and more insensitive, which makes it easier to justify treating them more and more inhumanely. It is vicious cycle for the men.

Further, most men seek wealth and status to impress women more than other reason, to get access to the only emotional resource that is allowed to them. Men were trained to see each other as competition for these limited resources. In fact in many other animals only the dominant male gets to mate at all with the females. The rest have to go without.

If we want an optimal society, then women will have to give up the privileges they have, and to fight for true equality in the emotional realm. They have fought for, and gained, a lot of material equality. Females had an emotional monopoly which had forced men to construct a material monopoly, as the only means to gaining some control of their needs. They had to make women dependent on them materially, as they were emotionally

dependent on women. When men and women have the same access to emotional resources, and are no longer dependent on each other for either material or emotional resources, they will be able to enjoy more authentic, balanced, fair, and rewarding relationships.

It is interesting to note how women complain that men will seek to use their power in the workplace to gain access to the sexual resources of the women who have sexual power over them. In other words the power in the workplace that men have is merely a balance to the sexual power an attractive woman has over a man. It is only when he has some other form of power that the man and woman are actually equal. The workplace power of a man (or woman) can be seen to be merely 'leveling the (sexual) playing field'.

All interactions involve some 'exchange' or 'transaction'. We have something someone wants and if we are lacking they have something we want, and vice versa. The luckiest people are those that have something someone else wants, to exchange for what the other has that they wants. This is when synergies can emerge. A synergistic relationship is the ultimate win-win interaction. Of course often people won't enter into the 'exchange', for psychological reasons or due to socio-cultural proscriptions. They fail to realize the potential synergy.

Insecure people seek advantages to counter their sense of insecurity. When men and women are given access to the same emotional resources, neither will need access to greater material resources. Of course some people just won't give up any privileges they have. Many women want to maintain their control of emotional and sexual resources. They want 'real men', ones that will pay for their lifestyle, entertainment, and be emotionally dependent on them. They also want material equality. They basically want to have more than the men.

The ad which seeks to touch our sentimental nerve, by making us empathize with the poor little girl who is not going to get anything for Christmas, to the exclusion of little boys in the same circumstances, is playing upon our emotional apartheid, and thereby promoting it. The ad is an act of violence against all little boys, and the men they grow into. Until we recognize the reality of our natures, we won't be able to improve the nature of our realities.

Little girls will get Christmas presents, and emotional support, and little boys will go without. Women will send their men off to war. Men will be legitimate targets of all forms of violence. Half of our society will be denied authenticity. Half of our society will be denied true security. The other half will blame them for most of the violence in our world. They might one day be ashamed of the violence that they, as women, committed on them. One day they might recognize that the violence that men commit is basically their own violence revisited upon them. The women may recognize that all violence that goes in must come out.

Retrospective revisionism

If someone is defined as mentally ill, or evil, or whatever, then people have a habit of retrospectively re-defining all of their past behaviors in line with this definition. You will define any past behavior of theirs that was unusual, unconventional, or uncomfortable for you as proof of their current status as 'mentally ill'. In fact most of their behavior were totally within the limits of conventional, average behavior.

If someone had threatened the dominant hegemonic order, then their criticisms and challenges will all be retrospectively defined as symptomatic of some mental disorder, rather than accurate, insightful, revealing criticisms and interrogations. Any reasonable and understandable emotional expression of their victimization can be redefined as irrational and erratic emotional outbursts. Their credibility can be undermined.

They are understandably angry now after being victimized, but you can just claim that they are simply irrationally angry and negative people. You can distract people's attention from the compelling facts by simply undermining the credibility of the 'messenger'. People won't bother reading the reports of a 'crazy' person, or someone with a 'chip on their shoulder'.

If you continually provoke someone, and then they ultimately react with the only means they have, physical violence, perhaps in an outburst of rage, they will be charged, convicted, and defined as violent. It is then easy to redefine all their past assertive behaviors as in fact aggressive. You can then seek to justify your violent treatment of them in the past. In other words, the violence that you produced in them will be retrospectively used to justify your violent treatment of them. In fact they were the victim. In fact you produced the violence in them through your violence to them. It is a form of teleology, one which begins in the present and is back-dated.

Remember that people tend to define assertive behaviors 'as 'aggressive' when it suits their interests. You will validate your friends' behaviors as assertive, but invalidate your enemies' behaviors as aggressive. You will retrospectively revise history to suit your purposes, or when it is convenient or satisfying.

A similar phenomenon relates to national prejudices. The same sorts of expressions and gestures that might be defined as 'emotional' in a Latino, Italian, Spaniard, or South American, will often be defined as 'aggressive' in a German.

Adding insult to injury

People who claim that you can choose how to respond to things that happen to you have usually themselves never been confronted with chronic and severe negative experiences. They often assume that the relatively mild, occasional challenges that they have overcome themselves qualify them to comment on the chronic and severe negative experiences that many other people have to face. They are self-satisfied that they have overcome grave challenges, when in fact they have had it pretty easy.

They then massage their own egos by telling themselves that not only are they heroes in overcoming the petty inconveniences life has dealt them, but they are wise enough as a result to preach to people with real problems. They have the ignorant arrogance to preach to victims that it is their own responsibility, that they just have to 'get a grip on themselves' and take responsibility, just face things more positively or whatever.

This is a real case of smug self-satisfaction and an insult to people with real, chronic, severe problems and experiences to get over, or confront, overcome, and basically live and deal with on a daily basis. They are adding insult to injury, congratulating themselves, and invalidating and trivializing the real suffering and injustice that other people have to confront. It is a real form of violence.

Most people take their support systems for granted. They have sympathetic and supportive family, friends, legal resources, medical resources, and financial resources. They have bright futures to look forward to. Their inconvenient experiences are merely a bump in their otherwise smooth paths. They have positive experiences to look back on, to reassure themselves, and gain a fundamental sense of security from. They are basically secure and confident. They have every reason to be.

Of course they can overcome the occasional mild obstacle with this intrinsic confidence and security. The people they dare preach to have histories of negative experiences, are basically insecure, and have no reason for confidence. If their future turns out bright, then that will come as a surprise, inconsistent as it is with their experience of life. Many people endure lives defined by all manner of violence and lack of positive opportunity.

Poverty is a form of violence. Denial of access to a sound educational environment is a form of violence. Being blamed for your own misfortune is a form of violence. Being unwanted and unloved from birth is a form of violence.

It is infuriatingly irritating to hear people who have enjoyed mostly positive life experiences tell others that 'all things happen for the best', and then, at the first experience of real loss, suffering, injustice, and so on, immediately 'lose faith' and 'lose their religion'. It is also noteworthy that people whose lives are defined by overwhelmingly chronic suffering, loss, and injustice often seek solace by compensating for their experience with excess 'faith'.

Worse, they are threatened with 'fates worse than death' as a threat to endure their lives, and are taught by religion and society to blame themselves for their predicament. In religious terms they are taught to seek 'redemption' by 'carrying their cross', by enduring their suffering, and 'earning' forgiveness for whatever it is that god must, reflexively, be punishing them for.

Recognising and eliminating all forms of violence

Since its inception, the Catholic Church, in its 'missionary zeal', has actively committed, or contributed to, at least as many atrocities and perversions as Stalin or Hitler. Today the Catholic Pope is calling on its Priests in Great Britain to fight, with 'missionary zeal', against the British government's policies on equality. This is a form of violence. The torture and horrific murders committed by 'The Catholic Inquisition', the Nazi regime, and Stalin, are all condemned. However the more subtle and mundane forms of violence that are perpetrated on a daily basis in our society go unrecognized. The victims of such violence never receive the validation necessary for healing to occur. They are denied the reality of their suffering.

We must remember that every initial move towards regulating human behavior has historically been met with the response that you cannot regulate human behavior. This was the popular response to traffic, smoking, and anti-discrimination laws. Most people oppose government regulation, wanting to believe that they know what is best for themselves and theirs, and will do this, voluntarily. However history has shown that this is patently not the case.

Public opinion was against laws to protect non-smokers, laws prescribing seat-belts, laws proscribing drink-driving, and laws to deter speeding. Antidiscrimination laws were resisted. Environmental and labor protection laws were opposed. Business leaders have always argued that they can 'regulate themselves'. Whenever the State granted them this option, they proved incapable or unwilling of self-regulation.

The massive environmental destruction, the cancers suffered by 'passive' smokers, the millions of road fatalities due to people not wearing seat-belts or driving responsibly, let alone sober, are all testament to the failure of 'self-regulation'. People actively lobby against regulation, however they tend to acquiesce once laws are put in place and enforced. Laws get people to act as if they were rational, holistically enlightened, and even considerate of the interests of others.

No violent large scale socio-historical events have emerged out-of-context. They never come 'from nowhere'. All events of a historical magnitude, of a large scale, are reflexive of the small scale ones, the daily 'events' and interactions of everyday life. This is why you should care about the more mundane, subtle, less newsworthy forms of violence in society. It is time to acknowledge them, to define them as the violence they are, and to validate their victim's suffering.

To date 13,000 homosexuals have been 'discharged' from the U.S military for their sexual orientation. Same sex marriages are not legally recognized. Sodomy is still a criminal offense in Malaysia, and many other Muslim nations. Unemployment is defined as an 'economic' problem, rather than a form of violence.

Laws against workplace discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation have helped reduce these forms of violence, however mobbing is yet to be defined under any legal system in the world as a form of violence. Most people's interest in justice rarely extends beyond their immediate family and friends. As long as we are the beneficiaries of inequality, we have nothing against it. In fact we desire inequality.

We are only against inequality, and interested in 'equality' and 'justice' when we are the victims of it. Most forms of violence are so thoroughly naturalized and normalized that they are not defined in either the legal culture or the popular language culture as violence. These are the forms of violence most commonly employed by the beneficiary classes.

Threatening children with 'Hell' for acting on their natural sexual instincts for masturbation or homosexuality and bi-sexuality, is a form of child abuse, a form of violence.

What goes in must come out: all violence that is experienced must be expressed in some form

All violence that is experienced must be expressed in some form. Most of the chronic violence people experience is not defined by the popular culture as violence. Mobbing, for example, is not defined as violence under any legal codes I know of. However it is no less devastating in its consequences than the less subtle forms of physical violence. Indifference, apathy, self-destruction (suicide bombers combine this with terrorism), self-mutilation, vandalism, drug abuse including alcoholism, domestic violence, road rage and 'accidents', rape, murder, suicide, mental illness, and psycho-somatic illnesses, are some of the forms in which violence which is experienced or impressed, finds its expression.

Faith, hope, goodwill, ease (as opposed to dis-ease), motivation, and peace of mind, are all victims of the violence that mostly goes unrecognized, unattended to, and therefore un-addressed in our society. Sometimes the violence experienced is expressed explosively, literally, in the form of mass scale hate crimes, genocides, wars, and acts of terrorism. However the greater damage is done every day, in the everyday forms of violence which go unreported, such as bullying, mobbing, victimization, exploitation, injustice, and inherited inequality. The next time you are a victim of violence, ask yourself just how innocent you really are.

Psychosomatic illness: what goes in must come out

The use of the concept 'psychosomatic' may need to be reconsidered. The term psychosomatic implies a distinction between the psychological and the physical. Doctors have long recognized that psychological problems are often 'expressed' in physical symptoms. Many patients come into the Doctors' office with physical symptoms and pain for which the doctor can find no physical explanation. Earlier many such patients were just derided as hypochondriacs, wasting the doctor's time. Later a model was proposed to explain the phenomena. It was considered that psychological pain and suffering and stress, dis-ease, could produce 'real' physical symptoms.

This thinking was of course still intrinsically Cartesian, based on the separation of the mind from the body. It is typical that the theory dominated the reality. The doctors had been trained to separate the mind from the body, and so came up with the theory of psycho-somatics to accommodate their compelling experiences. Perhaps what would have been more valid would have been to throw out the Cartesian dualistic way of seeing the world, and accepting that the mind is a part of the body, that they together form a whole that cannot be separated.

But scientists are often stuck inside their squares, and rather than think outside the circle, they merely attempt to reconcile inconsistent but compelling observations with their inherited ways of defining. Rather than recognize that the mind and the body formed a whole, they merely posited that the mind could somehow influence the body. What data am I talking about? For centuries doctors have known that small amounts of chemicals can alter our perception, our mood, our experience of the world, our sense of wellbeing, our emotions, basically all of the things we consider to belong to the realm of the mind or psychology.

If a small amount of some chemical can kill us, provide us with euphoria or depression, make us energetic or lethargic, even psychotic or gentle and loving, then it must be obvious that our psychology is physical. Today scientists are aware of how our nervous system works. Our emotions and feelings are triggered and regulated with hormones, adrenaline, and all manner of chemicals produced by the body in response to our perception of threats or opportunities.

It works both ways. We can experience the sensation of 'fear' when seeing a tiger triggers our nervous system. Or chemicals we consume can lead us to experience a generalized sense of anxiety, so that we will become afraid even of a harmless kitty-cat. Ask people who've taken any psychotropic drugs. We can also be 'primed' or 'conditioned' to response to stimuli in a certain way, by past experiences, education, 'brain-washing', or simply by the movies we watch and the books we read.

All the scientific evidence compels us to see our organism as a whole, to abandon the conventional distinction between psychology and physiology. Our brains are not just in our heads. They are also the tips of our toes. Our brain and all our other organs and glands are integrated into a whole. Parts of the whole have particular functions, but they are all interdependent. Our brain is part of our nervous system. The nerves in your toes and scalp are a part of your brain.

It is arbitrary to make a distinction between a psychological shock and a physical one. You feel the shock as a real force, as a real physical phenomena. Even as you anticipate or think of something good or bad, you feel physical sensations of joy or fear, in your entire organism. Your pulse changes, your stomach tightens, your breath quickens, you 'feel' fear or positive anticipation. They are as real as any other experience. You feel the shock of fear or loss, of abandonment, of loneliness, of depression, as you would a baseball bat impacting with your stomach.

So-called psychological violence is as real and damaging as any other form of violence. Its symptoms are just as vivid and destructive and painful. What goes in must be expressed. A whack on the head will produce a bruise or a fracture. Other forms of violence can 'fracture' or 'bruise' the person in other ways, in what we arbitrarily distinguish as 'psychological' ways. The old saying 'sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never harm me', is patently not true. You can damage someone with hurtful words as efficaciously as hitting them. Moreover, the 'psychological' wounds may hang around well after any more superficial 'physical' damage has been repaired.

Since I was an older child I felt that everything that goes in must come out. I have since found this feeling validated by compelling scientific research that demonstrates that emotional impacts will express themselves as physical symptoms. Of course I am using invalid language, and must be clear about this. The emotions are an integral part of our whole being. When you hurt someone emotionally you are hurting them, per se. There is no separation between emotions and physiology, it is a conventional myth, based on invalid reasoning, and our earlier ignorance of how the body functions. It is of course embedded in the popular language culture.

All experiences, all impressions, are physically stored somewhere in the body for later 'expression'. In the same way that the body physically shuts down, 'goes into shock', when it is overwhelmed by 'physical' pain or stress, the emotions do so too, when an emotional shock is too great for it to process and 'express'. What goes in must come out, but the body recognizes that the shock of processing some shocks would destroy the organism, so it 'protects' itself by 'storing' the shock somewhere in the body. L Ron Hubbard called these depots 'engrams', 'emotionally charged 'memories'.

People are 'taught' to deny particular experiences or memories, to pretend that they never happened. Often very important 'significant others' more or less demand this behavior as a condition of their acceptance and approval. Parents often demand this of their children. Remember Bateson's Double bind? The wider circle of friends often demand it, and the wider community definitely demands it. If you fail to subscribe to the dominant hegemonic culture you will experience dis-approval, rejection, and ultimately abandonment. You will be denied access to social approval, acceptance, material wellbeing, and the security all of this provides.

Socially, people are 'taught' to deny many things, and hence repress them into their subconsciousness. The person often cannot reconcile their experience with what 'should' be, or what they desperately want or need to be, and so their organism reflexively protects itself by assigning those experiences and memories to that part of it that we call the 'subconscious', or to 'engrams'. It is merely another way of saying that the organism temporarily denies awareness or consciousness of something until it is strong enough to risk 'processing' or 'expressing' it.

This may be what Bateson means when he says that schizophrenia could be the organism's way of trying to heal itself. 'Acting out' and bizarre behaviors or thoughts may be an 'expression' of the pain that cannot be otherwise, 'conventionally', expressed. Of course conventional psychotherapy or 'talking' therapy seek to reveal and express such 'repressed' emotions.

Men are traditionally less verbally expressive. They tend to deride what they saw as a typically 'womanly' trait of talking about problems. Men felt they were expected to solve problems. Thus they rejected the notion of talk-therapy. Men tended to keep their problems to themselves, to get drunk, and to get into fights, as a way to express their frustrations. If you don't express things directly, they will find an indirect expression, often at a much higher cost.

Women would share their problems with each other, even if their 'listening' was often more superficial than active. However simply by talking, their impressions, their experiences, find an expression. Often just feeling safe enough to talk about something can provide us with opportunities to hear ourselves, and to avoid 'catastrophizing' every problem. Often we are unaware of unresolved issues, frustrations, fears, longings, hostility, and desire, until we hear ourselves expressing them.

To quote 'Alice in wonderland'; 'How do I know what I have to say until I've heard what I've said?' More often other people will notice it before us. If we have friends, they can provide us with insights into our selves. Often we feel alone in our problems. By talking and listening, we find that most of our experiences are shared. In fact it is often our shared problems, fears, frustrations, and insecurities that bring us together, and provide us with a sense of solidarity and belonging.

Men are coming more and more to recognize the power of simply talking about problems, rather than seeking solutions, and 'repressing' emotions and problems for which they can find or see no solution. Of course men tended to self-medicate with alcohol or violent sporting activities. They figured that most emotional problems had

no solution, so it was best just to 'tough it out', to 'chew it off and push it down'. They focused on finding technical solutions and psycho-pharmaceutical 'distractions' or 'repressors'.

Because the most powerful emotions are 'repressed', either actively and deliberately, or automatically and not-consciously stored somewhere in our nervous systems, what we used to call the 'sub-conscious', we need a way of measuring physiological responses to psychological prompts, to know when our 'questions' have 'hit an emotional nerve'. We can't assume that the patient will be 'honest' with us, or even that they are capable of such 'honesty'. We cannot rely on the 'patient' having 'self-knowledge'. Sometimes they will try to deceive us. Sometimes they aren't even aware of their own 'self-deceptions'.

The e-meter, using galvanic skin charges as an indicator, allows the counselor to recognize when a person is repressing or denying something. The body would respond, physiologically, through minute traces of 'sweat' which produce an electric or 'galvanic' charge, when the therapist's 'probing' touched an emotional nerve, referred to some emotionally charged event, or awoke some dormant memory in the person.

The physiological response betrays a deeper seam of 'pay dirt' to delve into, even where the person isn't willing or able to admit or recognize it themselves. This is, after all, the whole point of the psychotherapy, to make us more 'self-aware' so we can re-integrate those parts of ourselves we have 'dis-owned' or repressed, and become 'whole' again, to recover our 'integrity'.

Often plasticine models are used to allow the person to 'express' what happened in nonthreatening ways, by projecting the experiences and emotions onto the dolls or figures.

This way they can protect themselves from some of the shock of reliving experiences. This would allow the counselor to 'interrogate' the person, by interrogating them about what the dolls are doing and feeling. The ultimate aim is to gently, in a non-threatening a manner as possible, bring the experience or memory they were denying out into the open. There it can be 'expressed', and worked out of their system, or, reflexively, reintegrated into their 'whole' experience.

They can then become 'whole' again, and can 'heal'. They can regain their 'integrity'. Remember how important this 'integrity' is to our ability to fight off pathogens and recover from diseases and illnesses. When we are 'whole' we are strong. Dis-integration ultimately means dis-ease, dis-stress, and vulnerability to pathogens, stresses, illnesses, and finally death.

As far as I can see, Scientology is similar to 'conventional' psycho-therapies, where people are encouraged to 'process' experiences, to talk about them, to work them 'through', to 'express' them. I guess the 'bonus' factor of Scientology is the potential 'placebo effects' of belief in the 'technology' of Scientology, and the confidence transferred from a belief in the authority, the extraordinary, almost 'super-natural' genius, of L Ron Hubbard himself.

In earlier societies the Shaman would express bad feelings, emotions, and experiences in the form of bad spirits or demons. The patient would have a similar 'faith' in the authority of their shaman that some people have in L Ron Hubbard or 'faith' healers. This would have a placebo effect. It would also have a 'calming' or 'therapeutic' 'easing' effect on patients.

People who expect to be healed by the shaman are already on the way to regaining their ease and laying the foundations for recovery. A famous psychiatrist's reputation, or even the 'local' psychiatrists 'credentials' and 'magic recipes' (they utter incantations in their own specialist language), can all put the person at ease, eliminate some distress, some dis-ease, and thereby produce 'placebo' effects.

In every epoch and situation the patients need a safe and non-threatening environment to approach their 'demons'. They need some 'magic' to have some faith in, to restore their calm and ease. Any 'explanation' or 'meaning' will also help empower the person. Giving their troubles a name, whether 'demon' or some 'Diagnostic Systems Manual' 'diagnosis', can help people recover their sense of 'control' and 'security'. What can be named can be conquered, managed, or understood. Names have such power for humans. Remember that the Vikings considered Runes, their written language, to possess magical properties.

Even the Shaman offered the patient psychotropic medications, often merely sleep-inducing herbs and roots, to help ease the shock of 'facing demons' and 'exorcising' them. Today it is usual for therapists to prescribe medications to manage the shock that 'expressing' the repressed emotions or experiences produces. Remember the pain and shock was repressed, denied, and safely 'filed away' in the first place, as it represented a real threat to the organism. The organism protects itself from this pain and shock until it can find a way to express it without being overwhelmed. This is why people need a safe, protective, and supportive place to express their feelings, and often medication to control the real pain.

Emotional pain is physical. The emotions are physical. This is scientific fact. Emotions are responses to stimuli, and to the needs of the organism. They motivate the organism's behaviors. Think about the last time you were 'rejected', or worse 'abandoned'. It feels like being kicked in guts.

External stimuli are processed in the nervous system, of which the brain is just one part. The consequence of such processing is the release of hormones and adrenaline and endocrines and morphiates and all manner of electrical and chemical messages to other organs, including the brain itself, preparing it and the other organs for responses.

We tend to distinguish between autonomic or automatic responses, and those responses which we feel we have 'considered'. This last group we define as deliberate or rational. The distinction is however arbitrary. It is an artifact of our human nature. At our most basic, fundamental level or nature, all of our thoughts are responses of our nervous system, reflexive of its inherited and learned definitions, to stimuli from the environment. All desires are emotional. Rationality is merely a level of composition removed from the emotion. Rationality answers the question that is raised by emotion.

The emotion is reflexive of the intrinsic biological definitions of the organism. How our biology defines certain events, conditions, situations, and experiences, is reflected in our autonomic, automatic, reflex, instinctive responses. This is the basis of all our emotions, values, and definitions. Our motives are all derivative of our emotions, our desires. These motives become conscious in the form of our 'will'. Once our desires have condensed into a 'will', this 'will' seeks its 'expression' via 'reason', the consideration of what means might be employed to attaining the ends of our 'will'.

We are emotional beings first. Reason is merely a tool the organism has at its disposal for calculating probabilities versus desirable outcomes. When we experience emotional shocks, they are physical shocks to our entire nervous system. They can overwhelm the nervous system's capacity for response. They 'short-circuit' to prevent massive overload. This occurs below and before the level of composition at which reason is engaged.

Emotional shocks are temporarily 'put on hold', but they draw attention to themselves.

This often takes the form of neurotic behaviors such as 'acting out'. Organisms, like all 'organizations', have their managing attentions forcefully directed to chronic problems only during a crisis, when denial is no longer possible. The production of neurotic crises via 'acting out', acting to reproduce the conditions that produced the original 'shock', may be how the organism directs its 'consciousness' back to a problem that is real, and doing damage, but which has up till now been repressed, and denied.

This sort of behavior, in which feelings and desires often relating to past relationships and experiences are unconsciously acted out in unrelated contexts' including present relationships, or directed towards unrelated objects or people, was first described by Sigmund Freud. I have written about Freud in detail in a companion book to TROONATNOOR titled 'Convergences'.

It is common that people only seek 'help' when they have 'hit bottom'. It then becomes impossible to ignore or deny any more than they have a problem. In this way the expression of the physical-behavioral can be seen as the organism forcing conscious attention onto the problems that have long been denied. It is directing the conscious attention to the emotional-psychical-physical pain that it had been repressing until it felt capable of processing it. This is may be why the problems of childhood are often repressed until adulthood, when the organism has greater integrity and resources to deal with the problem.

Most forms of drug abuse can be seen as a form of 'self-medication' for the emotional pain. The person may feel pain, without being able to identify its exact source, as that source is being repressed, to protect the organism from the full shock. Drug abuse is also a form of distraction or escape from the painful reality. The most common and most destructive forms of drug abuse include alcohol and prescription drugs.

Depression is of course a withdrawal from pain. Suicide is the ultimate withdrawal from the pain and trauma that we often dismiss or trivialize as merely 'emotional'.

Self-harm as expression, and Electroshock therapy

Self-harm behaviors such as hair pulling and 'cutting', or '*Saddies*' are satisfyingly addictive. They provide temporary distractions, and hence relief from, tension, anxiety, stress, and depression. It is soothing. It is a distraction from real pain, frustration, and anger which can't be dealt with. The person feels they have no means to address the real issues.

I believe that any, if there are indeed any, therapeutic effects of Electroshock therapy are of the same nature. I feel it is probably merely a formalized and institutionalized form of self-harm. The patient is distracted from other forms of acting out by the shock. Their attention is temporarily distracted away from their current worries, problems, and fixations. The only difference is that it doesn't leave any visible scars, so the community is more comfortable with it. It is like stepping on someone's toe to make them forget their toothache. Very 'therapeutic', but doesn't get rid of the problem with the tooth.

As I have reiterated throughout this book, everything that is impressed, must needs be expressed. What goes in must come out. And like Alice in Wonderland, often we don't know what is 'in' until we express it 'out'. As such our behaviors often 'reveal' things about us we were not 'conscious' of. Remember Engrams?

We are closed systems. 'Cutting' and hair pulling is a phenomena mostly associated with young females having problems with their mothers. Unable to express how they feel in any other way, they express themselves through self-harm. Six million U.S teens suffer from self-harming activities. Many celebrities such as Angela Jolie and Johnny Depp have suffered from 'cutting'. Many other more or less self-destructive or risk-taking behaviors of adolescents would probably also fall within the category of 'self-harm'.

Risk taking behaviors, violent sports, and violence in general, can all be seen as a form of expression of emotional pain, anger, rage, and frustration. One sufferer validated my beliefs literally, saying that self-harm was the 'only way to get emotional pain out'.

Children are relatively powerless in our society. They are materially and emotionally dependent on their parents. Parents live in denial. They insult, invalidate, ignore, and seek to 'control' their children. Parents often betray the trust of their children. They deny their children authenticity. This results in pain, hurt, shame, sadness, loneliness, frustration, and alienation. Any emotional pain can lead to self-harm as a 'solution'. What children cannot verbally express, will find another form of expression.

Of course some forms of expression can lead to resolution. The problem is that many parents will not validate the problem. This denies the child the possibility of resolving the problem. Some children will merely engage in sex or drugs to draw attention to the fact that they have problems, to gain their parent's attentions, and seek validation of their problems. The child is not allowed by the parents to draw attention to the actual problem, as the parents are denying that that problem exists.

The child may go on to ease their dis-ease by distracting them from the unresolvable pain with physical pain. Children cannot force their parents to admit to the real problems, let alone address them. They are powerless. Their 'self-harm' is an expression of this powerlessness. It is a desperate scream for help, a desperate plea or appeal to their parents to acknowledge the real problems, validate the child, and address the problems and the child's needs.

Self-harm has been reportedly been adopted as a coping behavior even by famous movies stars such as Johnny Depp and Angelo Jolie. Even three and four year old children often seek to express what they are otherwise unable to, emotional pain, anger, powerlessness, frustration, rage, and so on, through self-harming activities. I saw a beautiful young girl poking a small open wound on her leg with a stick. It was very disturbing to imagine what lay behind this behavior. She was very slender. Was she expressing her hatred for her body which punished her with hunger when she was desperate to remain slender?

Bulimia is another common form of self-harm. Many young people seek to numb their emotional pain, to distract their attention from the real emotional pain that they can find no way of expressing. It is a coping behavior. Self-harm is a response to feelings of having no means of expressing emotions, or to having these emotions, when

they are expressed verbally, invalidated by parents and significant others. Of course the dominant hegemonic social reality often invalidates them as well. They are denied authenticity, reality, and a means to express themselves in positive, constructive ways.

Until we validate the very real problems we face, we will not be able to 'integrate' our experience of them into our total. This will produce dis-integration, dis-stress, and disease. We cannot 'heal', and be 'whole' again, to regain our 'integrity', until the real problems we face are at least validated. Ideally we would then go on to find solutions. However in many cases the greater damage is done by the invalidation itself. We are capable of coping with most of what reality throws at us, when we are whole, when we have integrity, when we are authentic and real.

I don't know how to scream loudly enough with this text to express my frustration with all of you who deny people reality. I cannot express how it breaks my heart. There are no words that could convey the weight of importance I want to give to this plea for the validation of everyone's reality. It is perhaps the most fundamental violence that is committed in our society. The victim's suffering is real. The consequences, expressed in a culture of violence, are real. We all pay the price. Stop deceiving yourselves. Stop living in denial. Stop lying. Start validating people's real experiences. Start living in reality. You might actually like it out here. At least then it wouldn't be so lonely a place for those of us who have already 'migrated' out here.

Post-traumatic stress disorder and sensitivity

During experiences of extreme pain, brain plasticity-neurons can become activated. These produce an increased sensitivity to any future stimuli. A minor irritant can produce the response of severe pain. These scientific findings are consistent with my own experiences that traumas and emotional suffering can be cumulative. The repeated experience of victimization from early childhood onwards can produce an increased sensitivity to injustice.

Psychologists consider such a sensitivity, which they define as an over sensitivity to injustice in general, in principle, rather than just in relation to their own particular, narrow interests, as a symptom of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. It is not uncommon for victims of PTSD to gain a great empathy for the suffering of others, and to become affectively committed to the idea of justice, that is, Justice in principle. Perhaps Jesus and Mohamed, may be cases in point.

They both experienced injustice and difficulties from an early age. I certainly suffer many of the symptoms outlined by Dr Leymann, who has done a great deal of research into mobbing and PTSD.

Dissidence

Dissidence threatens definitions and balances of power, and current distributions of privileges and benefits. It is therefore defined as a threat by privileged vested interests. By virtue of hegemony, even those that in fact stand to benefit from dissenting views, and the systems of relations they would inform, will view dissent as revolutionary or destructive. Dissidence threatens the natural state of things. It threatens cherished beliefs which have interdependently arisen as effects of the current 'balance of power-balance of competing definitions'.

All minority cultures implicitly represent dissidence as they represent alternative belief systems which contradict the dominant belief systems, in total or in part. Minority cultures therefore represent a threat to the balance of power-balance of competing definitions of the dominant society.

Alternative cultures and their ways of being and seeing inevitably bring the dominant culture under scrutiny in some way. The risk is that once little things are questioned, more fundamental and threatening questions might be asked.

Mozart, the French Impressionists, astronomers, and humanists, among a huge number of other 'radicals', were defined by their contemporaneous cultures as dissidents. They were threatening to their contemporaries as they represented new ways of seeing the world, new ways of defining things. This makes people uncomfortable. People want to be reassured in their beliefs and assumptions, and validated and legitimated in the behaviors these ultimately inform, or are used to nominally justify.

Further, any new way of defining things could be a catalyst for challenging the whole system of definitions, and the relationships of power and privilege these support.

Similar arguments apply in the case of sexual minorities, whether homosexual, lesbian, bi-sexual, or non-monogamous. Any identifiable or definable group which has openly rejected dominant practices, whether sexual (homosexual, bi-sexual, pre and extramarital), dietary (vegetarian, vegan), or ethnocentrism (animal rights activists), will be defined as dissident, and as a threat to the current balance of interests, powers, and privileges. Practices follow from such definitions, including social, legal, and criminal proscriptions and disadvantages. Being gay or vegan is a threat to the hegemonic powers. This is the definition of dissidence. In fact even during the Renaissance, Leonardo Da Vinci was at risk of being 'roasted' alive by the inquisition simply for being vegetarian and homosexual.

My veganism appears to threaten people. How often have I been asked 'You don't think vegans are better people, do you?', giving me no choice of response. It is hard to tell people who are being nice to you, who have welcomed you into their homes, that in fact they are cruel to animals. Whether the cruelty is direct, or indirect, has no impact on the cruelty the animal's experience. If no-one paid to eat them, no-one would be raising them for the slaughter. Few consumers of animal products make any effort to ensure any degree of animal welfare, let alone animal rights.

Defining dissidence as mental illness

Dissidence has been defined as mental illness as a means of stigmatizing dissidents, and undermining their credibility. Whistle-blowers are routinely sent by government departments to psychiatrists the government have control over. These psychiatrists collude and conspire with the victimizers of whistle-blowers to define them as unfit for service. This practice is most common within the Military, and the Health and Education Departments of N.S.W, Australia.

This behavior on the part of the N.S.W Dept. of Education, has come to be known as 'HealthQuesting'. After years of this practice of victimizing' whistle-blowers and any internal voices of dissent or critique, the government commissioned an independent report into the then current system. This report recommended changes in both the medical and administrative operations of HealthQuest. HealthQuest has since been disbanded. An independent statutory body has been set up to carry out government employee medical assessments.

In reality a government body is unnecessary, as legislation allows government officials to attend an assessment with any doctor of their own choice. For this reason we should be very concerned about why the government insists on maintaining control of the medical assessment process. What 'government' body was ever, in reality, actually 'independent'? Surely we risk governmental interference, directly or indirectly, in the process. The whole thing may be all 'impression management' to make it look like the government is taking measures to address the previous corruption and incompetence. I smell at least a hint of smoke, and see at least a glimmer of mirrors!

Whatever the real significance of that government response, not one of the victims of 'HealthQuesting' has ever been given justice. The government has implicitly recognized that particular individuals were victimized, however it has done nothing to redress their injustice. The government go on spending hundreds of thousands of dollars, employing Queens's councils to deny victims natural justice. The victims are often forced to represent themselves due to the denial of legal aid. It is therefore not surprising that the opportunistic, highly paid, highly trained, highly experienced legal prostitutes called 'Queens Council', prevent anyone gaining natural justice.

There are of course many historical precedents for governments defining dissidents as 'mentally ill'. These include Nazi Germany, Bolshevik-Leninist Russia, Middle-Ages Catholic Spain, and McCarthy's America.

If you can define a competitor in a conflict of interests as mentally ill, or unfit, then you can undermine their credibility. You can destroy their will to fight for natural justice. You can ruin their reputations, their careers, their lives. You can effectively destroy them.

Judges and independent investigators have agreed that the N.S.W Dept. of Education deliberately sought to have employees who had lodged grievances or reports of victimization or mismanagement certified as 'unfit for service', so that they could be medically retired. They did this to avoid having to respond to their grievances and reports of mismanagement. The Dept. actively 'medicalized' essentially organizational problems. Many people's careers and lives had been ruined by N.S.W Dept. of Education. They felt that this was a small price to pay to maintain the impression that 'there are no problems' with their Education system.

You can read more about this in my book 'An education in victimisation'.

In Korea, after a conspiracy between my employer, the immigration department, my recruiter, the local, state and federal police, and Interpol (assuming the officers were who they represented themselves to be), these authorities, according to my mother and brother, attempted to convince my mother to send money to Korea in order to pay for involuntary psychiatric treatment. If they could define me as insane, then the police and other officials who had behaved criminally and corruptly would be free from prosecution. Either they are criminal and corrupt, which I could easily prove, with witnesses and documents, or I am crazy. The easiest way to deal with their problem was to have me defined as mad.

You can read about my experiences in Korea in 'Sung Seng Nim: A tale of two faces'. What happened there was so hard to believe that I began writing a diary just to make sure that my perceptions and interpretations were not biased. I was, after all, in a very different culture from the Western European one I grew up in, and there was always the chance of cultural or linguistic misunderstandings. However the last few days proved, against what I wanted to believe, that the people I was dealing with were corrupt and had no concern for my interests. I was not Korean. In a dispute between Koreans and foreigners in Korea, the interests of the Korean will, according to everything I have experienced and been told, be given priority. At the same time much will be done to give the appearance that Koreans respect the law, and are nice to foreigners. Hence the title, A tale of two faces. Be warned, if you plan even on visiting Korea. They have two unbelievably contradictory faces, charming, friendly and helpful, and threatening, unscrupulous and corrupt.

To be fair, people are like this everywhere I have been. The Minister for Education is just as sly and dodgy as any of the Korean English Teacher recruiters I have dealt with. The N.S.W Dept. of Education is just as incompetently and dilettantish managed as any Korean Hogwan. This is why both the Minister for Education and Korean recruiters have to trick teachers into working for them with false promises, and totally disingenuous contracts. As one Korean recruiter admitted to me, 'when we told the potential teachers the truth, none of them accepted our job offers'.

Chinese 're-education' camps and dissidence

According to official U.S intelligence reports, 250, 000 Chinese are in 're-education' forced labor camps. This doesn't stop the U.S from trading with China.

The U.S administration did, however, prevent a Chinese company from buying a U.S oil refining company. Remember, The U.S has had a long-running policy of seeking what they call 'full-spectrum domination', which includes control the worlds of oil and gas reserves.

These 're-education' camps are an example of how the dominant hegemonic interests recognize that to dominate, they must ensure that the definitions reflexive of the dominant hegemonic system are 'internalized' by all social actors.

In the West they 'medicalize' dissent and 'whistle-blowing' as 'psychiatric disorders'. In this way they discredit and marginalize any 'heretics'. China continues the tradition of Stalin in the former U.S.S.R, by using forced labor as a tool of 're-education'. The use of such coercion is a tool to break the 'double bind' the dissident finds themselves in.

You either accept the dominant hegemonic definitions or suffer. Most people will manage to 'convince themselves' they were wrong, to reconcile their wish not to be tortured with their 'awareness' of reality. Others will just pretend and wear a mask, which is enough for the authorities. Once they are released their 'masks' will be used as proof by the dominant hegemonic order that the person has 'realized' their folly, and be taken as evidence of their subscription to the dominant hegemonic 'social reality'.

Of course the really 'crazy' heretics won't give in. They will die in the labor camps, or in specially set up 'psychiatric' hospitals. Most people would see this as proof that they really must be crazy, at least crazy enough to 'take up arms against a sea of troubles', with virtually no chance of success, and every chance of a miserable existence and horrific death.

As George Bernard Shaw said, it is to such 'unreasonable' people that we owe most of our progress. Their contemporaries will victimize and abandon them. Future beneficiaries will admire them as heroes and leaders.

Most people would say that they sacrificed too much for their principles. But they would see it the other way around. They were not willing or able to sacrifice their principles. They would define others as having 'sold out' much too cheaply. They value their principles above any shiny baubles that society can offer. Most of them were true 'passive resisters' in the Ghandian sense. They courageously suffered. It takes much greater courage to suffer 'passively', then to become a soldier, or a terrorist. It is also much less satisfying. And you can't even count on an after-life full of beautiful, sexy, innocent, undemanding, keen-to-satisfy, young virgin girls.

Social reality and schizophrenia: conflicting realities, power, and victimization

David Smail, a psychotherapist considered part of the anti-psychiatry movement, has written extensively of the 'embodied nature' of the individual in society, and the unwillingness of even therapists to acknowledge the obvious part played by power and interest in modern Western society. He emphasizes the fact that feelings and emotions are not, as is commonly supposed, endocentric features of the individual.

They are in fact exogenic responses of the individual to their situation in society. Even psychotherapy, Small suggests, can only change feelings inasmuch as it helps a person to change the 'proximal' and 'distal' influences on his life, which range from family and friends, to politics and work. Small saw how a powerful family nexus could victimize one member, usually a child, who found themselves in the position of not being able to speak or even think the truth without being chastised by the group, who often had vested interests in perpetuating the family myth and excluding reality.

Our need for others makes us afraid to contradict a family nexus, risking family exclusion. The distortion involved in not going against the nexus can force wrong thinking - leading to 'not being in reality', which Laing saw as the essence of schizophrenia. Laing saw schizophrenia as a possible healing process. Collier suggests that we must all be 'mad' to some extent if we are to function in society, rather than as loners, but we must share the same forms of madness, the same illusions and 'social reality'.

The term 'Double Bind' coined by the anthropologist Gregory Bateson, refers to a communicative situation where a person receives different or contradictory messages. It is used by Bateson to attempt to account for the onset of schizophrenia without simply assuming an organic brain dysfunction. The victim is expected to conform to lies which have currency within a family or society, but which contradict the observable reality. He considered that Schizophrenia might be the mind's attempt to 'heal' itself. I came to my own similar conclusions in terms of the partitioning the mind, and acting out, as an attempt of the fractured whole to heal itself.

There are, as I argue, several 'realities' that any individual must negotiate, as one would 'negotiate' treacherous mountain terrain, bogs, swamps, quick-sand, or 'negotiate' with the powers that be, or even 'negotiate' with a madman who has taken your loved ones hostage.

There is great potential for 'cognitive dissonance', 'conflict', or 'non-convergence' between the various 'realities'. Our dependence on social networks for our survival makes such conflicts inevitable. Schizophrenia is only ascribed when the dissonance or conflict is economically and socially dysfunctional. It is only identified as a problem by others if it makes them uncomfortable, or makes it impossible for the individual to function in terms of relationships between themselves and their significant others, social groups, and the larger society. While it is usually the majority that are usually wrong, it is easy for the majority to assert their 'majority rule' and collectively validate their invalid reality. This reflexively defines the minority, valid, reality, as invalid. The majority simply assert that their dogmas are truth.

Many pathological conditions are actually functional, in terms of the dominant, hegemonic social reality and social order. The most 'successful' people in history have been psychopaths. Most heads of large corporations, successful sports-people, business people, and political leaders, have a psychopathic personality.

It is only when the dissonance is 'dysfunctional' in that it challenges the hegemonic social reality, or that of significant others whose emotional support is desired or needed, that schizophrenia is 'ascribed', and the condition is defined as 'schizophrenic'.

Mobbing

Mobbing is a defining characteristic of human interactions. It reflects the opportunism innate to human nature. Mobbing is an abuse of power. The power of the mobbers allows them to avoid being held accountable for their actions. All exploitation is essentially mobbing.

Whistle-blowers are people who reveal information that threatens the power and privileges of some group. Philosophers and scientists were the original whistle-blowers. The authority of the priests was dependent on the bible being the infallible word of god. If the world was round, and rotated around the sun, then the bible was fallible, and possibly not the word of god. The priestly class were the beneficiaries of the system of definitions and relations that the bible legitimated. People are loathe to lose their power, privilege, and benefits.

The priests coerced philosophers and scientists into remaining quiet. They were threatened with 'fates worse than death'. They were tortured and murdered when these threats did not persuade them to keep quiet. They were burnt alive, or hung, drawn and quartered. They would have ropes tied to their hands and feet. They would then be sliced open at their joints. The ropes would then be pulled by horses until they were torn into pieces. This of course motivated anyone else in the society to keep their mouths shut. Anyone who did not actively and vociferously support the actions of the priesthood, even these very actions, would potentially expose themselves to the same treatment. Few people had such strong convictions or principles that they would risk such a cruel and painful death. This was an early form of constructing public opinion and collective ignorance.

Those people who supported the priesthood and the privileged and powerful, for example with specious sophistry camouflaged as 'philosophy' (Thomas Aquinas is perfect example), would be rewarded. (Hence Saint Thomas Aquinas). This is the basis of the saying, 'go along to get along', or 'don't stick your neck out'. Anyone who challenged Nazi dogma, and hence the privileges and power of the Nazi elite, would be coerced into silence or public gestures of approval. Those whose strength of convictions, whose principles, were stronger, would end up in labor camps, prisons, and basically dead. Those who actively promoted the dogma would be rewarded with high status, privilege, and power. The SS and the Soviets kept most of the privileges and rewards for itself, and rewarded those loyal to them.

Dogma offers the most security of all. It offers certainty and clear ways to gain approval, acceptance and the real social security. The Nazi's did in fact provide handsomely for the welfare and wellbeing of the average person. The cost of this was a denial of basic freedoms. More sinisterly, many of the benefits were paid for by others, by those the Nazi dogma labeled as inferior or evil, the Jews, and the rest of the eastern Europeans. Few people could fail to be seduced by the material benefits, and more importantly, the absolute security of being the chosen people, the master race, with the absolute certainty of being accepted and approved of, as an 'Aryan'. Within this exclusive race Hitler had produced real solidarity. It would be disappointing if you failed to see that Moses and Hitler behaved in the same ways, and with the same consequences.

Stalin behaved the same way in Russia, employing the same instruments, offering the same security. He, like Hitler and Moses, viciously and unscrupulously destroyed anyone who challenged his dogma, his power. The Gulags were the destination of anyone who represented any threat to his dogma. Any actual opponents, or anyone who might possibly be or become Hitler's, Moses, or Stalin's opponents, were systematically annihilated.

In our everyday modern world, within our organizations, the same phenomena is experienced, only in a slightly more subtle way. Whistle-blowers implicitly challenge the competence, motivations, ethics, legality, or technical soundness of their co-workers and/or management.

The movie, 'The Insider', portrays the story of a Tobacco industry research scientist who 'blew the whistle' on his former employers. The tobacco industry would have preferred to be able to burn him alive, or to send him to a gulag, or just plain kill him, I am certain. The tobacco industry has killed millions of people in their cynical lust for profits. The tobacco industry provides incredible privileges and wealth for its beneficiaries. They have consistently

used this power to deny people reality, to define smoking as desirable and harmless, to construct a reality in which tobacco products were not deadly, not toxic, poisonous, addictive nicotine delivery systems.

They had the power to manipulate public opinion through the mass media, to manipulate the legal system and lawyers and judges, and to deny their victims any justice, or even reality. The tobacco industry is a filthy and immoral business. It would, in a more just and ethical society, be a criminal one.

Robert Baer, a CIA Base Officer, was one of a group of high up officials within the CIA who 'blew the whistle' on illegal political campaign financing and corruption regarding the allocation of contracts for the reconstruction of Iraq. The C.I.A, among others, sought to intimidate him. He was told that if he insisted on bringing up the issue of campaign financing again, he would be sent to prison. He was ordered to undergo a psychiatric exam from a 'controlled' psychiatrist. This is typical. If he were allowed to choose an 'independent' psychiatrist, the CIA could not be able to control the outcome, to determine the 'diagnoses'.

They use their 'own' doctors, who will make the diagnoses they are told to. They will act in the interests of those paying for the tests, not in the interests of the truth, or justice, let alone the patient's actual medical interests. He stated openly for the public record that he knew that he could be locked up in a 'controlled' psychiatric hospital, with no way of escaping, if he was 'naive' enough to take the exam. He said he had no reasonable choice but to resign. He was later awarded a medal, for keeping his mouth shut, like the survivors of that U.S Navy 'incident' during the 1967 war in Israel a.k.a 'Operation Synaide'.

Later researchers found clear and damning evidence of election campaign finance being received from those who would later benefit from the wars in Iraq.

In the public service or in most employment situations, mobbing will be even more subtle. Your co-workers and supervisors will lie about you. When you follow grievance procedures, any investigation of your grievances will be made internally, often by the very people who have been mobbing you. They will not only not investigate your grievances, they will use any information you give them against you. They will actively and passively facilitate the collusion and conspiracy of those you identify in your grievances.

They can get together, plot their strategies, and consolidate their mobbing. They can make sure their stories are consistent, and ensure that everyone 'plays' along with the 'official fiction' and 'toes' the official line. Potentially sympathetic witnesses can be convinced, encouraged, threatened, and intimidated, into complicity with the mobbers.

You will be sent, as an administrative expedient, to a Psychiatrist that the organization has paid to define you as unfit for service. You will be under great stress, most likely depressed and angry, and you will have been lied about, and to. The psychiatrist will have no problem doing their master's bidding, and labeling you as depressed, angry, and suffering from delusions of persecution. You believe there is a conspiracy against you, that you are being persecuted. A persecution complex is evident.

No-one ever intended investigating your grievances. They will claim to have, and to have found no evidence for your claims. For all intensive purposes this whole circular logic will find that you are in fact suffering from mental illness. This will conveniently and teleologically account for everything, including the behavior that your lying colleagues and supervisors attributed to you, and your current state of depression and hostility, and your 'persecution complexes'.

You will be defined as 'unfit for duty', and 'retired' on 'medical' grounds. If you insist on being assessed by an independent psychiatrist, you will be fired for failing to follow the 'lawful direction' to attend the appointment they had made for you with their 'hired gun' psychiatrist, the one they 'own'. No-one will investigate your case. The media will not be interested, as it is not sexy enough, and they do not want to risk lawsuits from the powerful public service or other employers. They may not even believe the story, or be so naive as to believe that such things simply could not happen 'in this day and age', 'in this country'.

If you insist on seeking natural justice you will be denied the right to work, and the right to pursue your career. Eventually the stress and frustration will get to you. You will either kill yourself or just give up. You may deny

to yourself what happened, and just go along to get along. You may go along with the lies and let them 'heal' you. You will have to lie and pretend that it never happened, and that you were sick, and are now better. Only when they have effectively re-written reality will they allow you back into the organization. Unless you can manage to repress and deny everything, you will end up unemployed and really 'mad'.

If you don't play their games, they will deny you the chance to work anywhere. They will blacklist you. You will not be able to get any references. You will not be able to get any other real job in your line of work. You will be encumbered with a medical record and employment record that will prevent you from most professional employment. You will live in a state of depression, suffer nervous breakdowns, become cynical, lose faith in human justice, and become negative and hostile. They will have robbed you of your future.

They will have robbed you of the most basic and fundamental and valuable thing a human has, their sense of security, acceptance, and approval. Not only will you have lost any chance at financial security, you will have been robbed of any trust or faith in humankind. You have seen what normal people get up to.

You will have nothing left to lose. If you do kill yourself, or take revenge on your victimizers, it would be no surprise, considering the circumstances. Of course either action would support all of your conspirator's and victimizer's claims about you. They would get the sympathy, while you would be dead, or in prison.

This is what happens when you depend on humans to be fair, reasonable, and just. This is what happens when you become any form of nuisance, or inconvenience. This is what happens when you seek natural justice within the official channels, via the official procedures and systems. They are there to prevent natural justice ever being granted the victim. They are not there to protect the victims. They are there to protect the bureaucrats and the perpetrators.

When you challenge dogma, you challenge the vested interests which that dogma validates. You challenge the privileges and power of individuals and groups. The individuals need not be deliberately and consciously aligned into conspiracies and collusion. They may merely share coincidental interests, and hence behave 'as if' they were actively colluding and conspiring together. Either way the outcomes are the same.

Many people who effectively share the same interests, and effectively collude and conspire as a 'vested interest group', are not even aware of the 'others' that make up that vested interest group, let alone wish to collude with them. They may even despise the others, and define them as competitors. This is one reason why Employers as a whole do not need to organize as workers do, into unions. The employers naturally behave in ways that promote a system of definitions and relations of exploitation. The invisible hand of self-interest works in their interests. Only the exploited and oppressed workers have to actively and consciously fight against this 'natural' condition or situation.

Today, under the new laws that Bush put in place, you can be defined as mentally ill, involuntarily medicated, and placed in a mental patient facility, simply for questioning the fatuously absurd official version of 911, or for reminding people that the U.S is a Constitutional Republic, with various inalienable rights that no Congress nor President has the right to invalidate. Or reminding people that The 'Patriot Act', named in the most ironic, weasel-word, propagandist fashion, is unconstitutional.

The psychiatrists who do their master's bidding will conveniently fail to look deeper into their cases, they will take the path of least resistance, and justify their judgments as nominally or at least speciously compelling. They didn't go any deeper, in case they might feel pangs of conscience compelling them to provide a judgment that didn't suit their masters. They have interesting and rewarding jobs which they don't wish to lose. If need be they will deny reality to themselves. Failing this, they can claim that they are powerless to do anything other than what they did. They can remain superficial, and let the 'symptoms' speak for themselves.

They don't have to go deeper to see if their 'patients' (victims) really are the victims of conspiracies, and whether all of their symptoms are not the natural and healthy response to that victimization. They don't have to and no-one will be able to judge them. They can justify that they need this job to pay for their kid's private schooling, and

the mortgage. There are so many ways in which they can deny, repress, justify, legitimate, and even glorify, their behavior.

They don't have to see what damage they have done to their victims, and what damage they have done to their own worlds, to the world that their children will inherit. They live very superficial lives, embedded within the hegemonic system of vested interests, and the definitions that serve them. They serve the vested interests, and are rewarded by it with material security, and the security that comes from their approval and acceptance within the dominant hegemonic system of relations. The violence that is done will be held at arm's length, at least for now.

But all impressions must be expressed. All violence that is perpetrated against a person or humanity or nature in general, must be reflected outwardly. This violence will be expressed in the culture of the society. It will ultimately become its defining property. Abuse, physical violence, crime, vandalism, racism, hatred, hostility, destruction, war, and terrorism will become the norm. Does the place I just described seem familiar to you? All impressions will be expressed, what comes in must go out, whether as externally directed aggression, or internally directed aggression such as depression and self-destructive behaviors.

As you sow, so shall ye reap. A bumper harvest of violence is being sown every day. And ye shall reap, make no mistake. You are in fact reaping as we speak. Do you feel really secure, at ease, at peace? Would you like to be done unto, as you have done and do unto others? Would you like your children to reap the harvest that you have sown? Can you account for war and terrorism any other way? Is the world becoming more at ease, more peaceful, a better place to be? Will you still deny your own responsibility? That won't help you, or your children, or their children.

Violence is portrayed in the media as a clean, efficient, and manageable means to good ends, whether in martial arts films, or U.S military footage of bombing missions. The media seeks to make violence noble. Real violence is messy, uncontrollable, and achieves little of what is claimed for it. Even the U.S bombing campaigns over the last 50 years achieved little militarily. They were public relations exercises meant to instill a sense of trust and security in the population in their military capacity and technological superiority over any potential aggressors. Of course no nation has posed any real threat to the U.S since the British, but this didn't mean threats were not 'constructed' for the public to feel reflexively insecure about. The 'surgical strike' is a myth. The efficacy of aerial bombing is a myth. The only people usually killed are civilians. Some strategic targets may be knocked out temporarily, but they are merely moved underground. The civilians and hospitals and schools, however, cannot be moved underground. Well, no, they are. They are buried.

Violence cannot be productive. Violence merely breeds more violence. The Military and big business know this. This is why they promote violence. They profit from the misery and suffering. The more violence they can produce, the more weapons they can sell, the more reconstruction contracts they can get, the more power the general public will give them, to 'protect' them from this violence.

The Australian Bureau of lies, damn lies, and statistics. Mobbing in the Australian Public Service

I was mobbed, victimized, and annulled at the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in Canberra. I was offered a job as a graduate economist with the Industry division of the ABS. I found out later that the man who had interviewed me was like me, a particular type of animal that was rare in those places. I was then offered a job in another division, starting sooner. As I wanted to begin working A.S.A.P I took the offer. This turned out to be a bad decision. Within a few weeks my supervisor had already felt threatened or offended by me. She had given me a document to 'revise'. The document took on the then popular form of question and answer that was supposed to make things easier for readers to understand. I found on reading the document that it took huge amounts of time to actually get the information I, as a reader, was supposed to get.

I rewrote the whole thing in a brief and succinct style that conveyed all the information with the least reader burden. No-one would have had time to read the previous document. Anyone would have been frustrated by the burden imposed on them. Most surveys are compulsory, and can very frustrating, time consuming, and expensive for the people who, by law, must respond to them. I managed to explain everything the user needed to know and understand in a brief document that they could read quickly, and then 'scan' later as a reference. I was pleased with my efforts and the result. I felt that I had made a real contribution, and that my efforts had yielded benefits for our clients.

However, inexplicably, my supervisor appeared really offended and defensive. She then explained to me that I had not been expected to rewrite the document. In fact she had written the original document. I then pretty much realized that I did not fit in. I wanted to do the best job I could, and provide the best service. Worse, I was willing to challenge other people's opinions, even if they were my supervisor.

During the development stage of the Training and Education Survey (T.E.S) I challenged many of the ways we were approaching the survey, and my ideas were usually, after some discussion, accepted and 'taken on board'. However I had to be insistent and patient even when the others felt it was inappropriate for me to challenge them. I was told by others that many people felt threatened by me, and at first I had no idea what they meant. Later I had to accept that some of my colleagues, all of whom were my 'superiors', saw my motivation and competence as a threat to their own status and prestige. They were supposed to be my supervisors, and were not used to having graduates correcting or challenging them.

As the year progressed other Graduates had been consistently promoted to Research Officer Positions, which represented a 30% increase in pay, from a really low graduate pay level. I applied for every position that came up. According to the official procedures I was supposed to be given an explanation about why I didn't get the position. None were forthcoming when I asked for such feedback. I was told that my boss would have liked to promote me, but that there were no Research Officer positions in the area where I was working. It became absolutely clear that graduates who were working in any particular area invariable got the research officer positions that came up in that area. Some other graduates were offended that I would dare question why I hadn't gotten the 'promotions' that they had been given.

It became clear that I would be a graduate until a position came up in my work area. I was told that none were in the pipeline. I was encouraged to apply for positions outside my work area for this reason. I was given excellent references. Other graduates were basically doing the same work as me, while being paid around 30% more. I had no chance to be promoted on merit, as the promotions were given to the Graduate Administrative Assistants who were working in the sections where the Research Officer positions were available, and there weren't going to be any Research Officer positions in my section for the foreseeable future.

I could understand that it would be reasonable to expect that a Graduate working in a section would be promoted in that section to the real job and real pay that they had joined the public service for. What was unfair was

that my section couldn't offer me the same merit based opportunities as every other section. This was clearly unfair. I would never have accepted the position if I had known this.

Almost two decades later I realize, in hindsight, that this was probably why that section were so keen to have me, and therefore offered to start me sooner than the Industry section could. This was the reason why no other graduate would take the Graduate Administrative Assistant position in the Education and Training section of the Social Division of the ABS.

I was supposed to just accept that there was no chance of me being promoted, whilst other graduates were being promoted left right and center, and being paid 30% more than me to do the same job I was doing. I had no choice but to keep doing my work under these frustrating circumstances.

Perhaps even worse than this, for someone with my desire to produce real value for the 'public' that I wanted to be of 'service' to, every supervisor I was given did not really expect me to be proactive or really contribute. I was working with people less educated and competent than myself, and they resented the idea that university graduates should be 'fast-tracked'. Eventually I was given some independent research work, working on the definition of religion for the Census. I sat down with my work group and we wrote down a detailed work plan, so that there could be no confusion later as to what was expected of me. The people supervising me were union members, including my direct supervisor, who I think was the union representative for our division. He was one of those who liked to complain about graduates being 'fast tracked' over people like him, who he considered were actually more competent as they had spent the 3 years working in the department while graduates like myself were in University getting our degrees and education. I suggested that nothing was stopping him from getting a degree. In fact his employer would actually assist him. And I didn't want to join his union, no matter how hard he pestered me and argued his case. This reminds me that one of my victimizers in the N.S.W Dept. of Education was the Union rep. who had tried to bully me into joining his union.

At some point things got nasty, and he began writing reports about me which were full of lies. I would then respond to each lie in point and demonstrate that it was a lie. He couldn't refute my refutations. He never even bothered to. No-one ever asked him to. No-one cared that he was lying. Rather than recognize that he was lying and victimizing me, those who were supposed to supervise him just let him go on to write new reports full of new lies.

We had negotiated and defined my task together, and he had personally written the task description. Once he began his lies, he simply ignored what he had written. And no-one else cared that he constantly contradicted himself, saying my task was so and so, when the document he had written himself stated clearly that my task was what I was actually doing.

To think that he had continually raved on about some new age of justice and enlightenment that we were supposedly entering, some 'age of Aquarius'. This is people for you. Full of self-congratulatory, smug, self-satisfied self-deception. They will act without any principles when it suits them. Their talk is merely a form of masturbation. They are so deluded and self-deceptive that they avoid seeing any contradiction between how they act, and the empty words they utter. Of course it is 'everyone else' that is unfair and unjust! Oh if only 'everybody else' would behave better!

I lodged grievances, strictly following the procedures set down for such situations. Not once were any of my grievances investigated. Any response I did get was simply infuriatingly and frustratingly provocative rather than helpful. In hindsight this is probably the intention of the victimizers, to 'provoke' anger, frustration, hopelessness, and then despair. They want the victim to give up in despair, or say or do something silly out of sheer frustration and anger. They'd even settle for a suicide, as then they could define their victim as mentally ill, and somehow this would legitimate and justify all their actions, at least to themselves, and nominally enough for a disinterested bureaucracy more than willing to be rid of any 'problem', and a public not concerned with justice, in principle.

It would have been dead easy to demonstrate to anyone that was interested and willing to investigate my supervisors that I was being mobbed. I had the lies, and proof that they were lies, in writing. The few sympathetic colleagues tried to convince me to give up, recognizing that no-one was ever going to investigate my grievances. They

could see how angry and depressed the situation was making me, and they realized that nothing I could do would change anything. I understand this, but it would have been nice if someone had tried to help me get some justice. It is not just the victimization that breaks your heart, but the lack of interest or help from colleagues, and so on. It can destroy any naive hope you had for humanity.

I once saw the head of my department walk by with a big split in his pants. I considered how he was not interested in the denial of natural justice and mobbing that I had tried to draw to his attention. He did not want to know about it. This person did not want to know about any problems in his department, but I anticipated that he might want to know about problems with his trousers. So I discretely drew his attention to the large tear in the seat of his pants. I guess I saved him some embarrassment. He thanked me, not knowing that I was the person whose grievances he was not investigating, the person he didn't want telling him about any 'problems'.

I still recall today typical interactions during my time at the ABS. I was told by my supervisors that it was ok to disagree with them, as long as I did what they said. Every time I took them up on this I got the same response. 'Ok, I disagree, but I will do what you want', I would say. 'What don't you understand', would be their reply. They would 'explain' themselves, and I would listen, reflect on what they said, find nothing compelling in what they had said, and respond once more with, 'ok, I understand. I disagree, but I will do what you want'. They would reply sort of incredulously once more with 'what don't you understand?'

It was clear that I understood. I would explain what I thought would be better. I made it clear I would do it their way, as they wanted. I was at no time rude or derogatory. I simply had a different view. I had been told that it was good to express my opinions. They said that I could disagree, as long as I did what was asked of me.

You see it is really important to me that I am authentic and express myself. You can tell me to do something stupid, but I have a right to state that I am doing it because you are telling me to, not of my own volition. I do not want to take responsibility for other people's low standards, competence, and rigor. I have a 'moral' right to be authentic, and to distance myself from other people's folly. I have a right to state my disagreement, and that I am doing what they told me because they are my superiors and have the final say. I never said or implied this, of course. I just expressed my alternative opinion and made it clear that I would do it their way.

They couldn't handle that at all. In fact, even though they reinforced time and time again that it was right to state my disagreement, as long as I did what was asked of me, every time I did so, they treated me like I was missing some point, or challenging their status. How dare I disagree with them, was the feeling I got from them.

Of course this is why most people say nothing, why they never express dissent or talk about problems, and why most management can therefore pretend there is no dissent amongst their workers, that, 'there are no problems'. It allows management to pretend they are competent. Of course public servants pat themselves on the back and vote themselves executive bonuses for their wonderful management. Look, no problems, aren't I great! And the workers have to wear masks and pretend, and deny their authentic selves.

This is a huge violence perpetrated upon them. The burden of wearing masks contributes to dis-ease, and a lack of authenticity. Being authentic means being yourself, being your whole self, and not having to continually deny parts of yourself. When we consider that the meanings of heal and holy are to make whole, either as an individual person or community, then we must recognize that by forcing people to wear masks, to deny themselves, to fracture their personalities, they are being made un-whole. They are being made dis-eased. They are being made sick!

I have often been told by co-workers that they respected and envied me for being authentic. They knew I would suffer for it, but they explained that they suffered more because they don't express themselves, or stand up for themselves. Of course they endure this as they need to keep their jobs. They choose to have nervous breakdowns, and act out their frustration elsewhere, rather than to confront their situation, colleagues, and management head on. They fear being mobbed. They have seen others mobbed for standing up for themselves. They feel powerless to be authentic. Instead they suffer in 'public' silence. In private, between themselves, they cry and rage against the injustice but they keep it private. They re-produce 'collective ignorance'. As there are no problems, no problems are addressed.

Management can pretend there are no problems, and that they are competent managers. They can pretend all they like. In most instances as long as they don't make any major mistakes they will be promoted over and over again. They are not evaluated on the opportunity cost of their management, but merely on the impression they make. By opportunity cost I mean the lost opportunities for improvement and innovation resulting from their poor management, their unwillingness to identify and address problems and implement innovations that would have resulted in improvements in motivation, working conditions, staff welfare, client service, and real value production. Management can pretend there were no opportunities, and no problems. People are conditioned to pretend, and make their bosses look good. They know that if they rock the boat they risk being thrown overboard. The culture is one of, 'the problem is, there are no problems'.

Real estate cons, and mobbing of whistle-blowers: the Jenman case

Jenman brought some transparency to the real estate industry. He 'de-mystified' the specious sophistry of cunning real estate agents and salespeople. For instance, he clarified the truth about auctions. They are convenient for the salespeople. They do not ensure that the seller gets the best price. Jenman interrogates and de-constructs the auction situation. Many potential buyers are not available for the very limited 'open house' opportunities.

Many buyers are not free to attend the actual auction itself. Those who do attend will in principle end up paying less than they were prepared to. At an auction, you only have to pay a little more than the next highest bidder. Jenman's research indicated that home buyers had been prepared to pay up to 20 thousand dollars more than they had had to. Had the salesperson negotiated with the buyers, they would have found this out.

Jenman attempted to bring sound ethics and fair practices to an industry that is renowned for its lack of ethics. A certain person, who claimed to be ethical based on their self-professed affiliation with Scientology, stated quite clearly that he would rip off an old lady who didn't know what her house was worth, as that was 'business'. This in fact has happened often enough. Salespeople have taken advantage of old people who have no idea of real estate values, and who trust the friendly well-dressed salespeople. Real Estate professionals have bought properties at half their real value. Such abuses continue.

Typical for this world, Jenman was mobbed for stepping on other unethical peoples' toes. The Real estate institute, a self-regulating body with a monopoly on licensing real estate agents, itself recommends 'milking' clients by getting them to spend big on advertising that in reality benefits only the agents, salespeople, and advertising industry. An agent who was attempting to use the Jenman system was even shut down by the Real Estate Institute.

I was pretty irritated to be told by a dodgy looking salesperson in a real estate office, that 'Jenman is a criminal, he's not even a licensed agent', who then tried to convince me that 'people outbid each other auctions, and pay more than they would otherwise'. The receptionist appeared very emotional when I mentioned Jenman. Of course they don't want people catching on to their scams, and their unethical behavior.

Jenman explained the rorts of the real estate system in his book. Real estate agents get their clients to spend big on advertising, so that they can both advertise their own agency for free, and get lucrative 'kickbacks' from the advertising agencies and newspapers. This can add up to tens of thousands of dollars. In reality most home buyers are actively looking for properties in a certain area, and come to the agents when they notice 'For Sale' signs. Good salespeople are actively canvassing to find homes for them. In other words the house will sell itself. The people most likely to buy your house are already looking for a home in your area. A for sale sign will catch their attention.

Salespeople also prefer auctions, as they don't have to provide any real service for their fees. They don't have to negotiate with buyers, or show them properties. They simply have 'open houses' for a few hours once a week. This isn't very 'active' in terms of marketing. They use this opportunity to collect the names and phone numbers of potential new clients. They just have to take the kickbacks from the advertising agencies for advertising the auction, register the interested buyers who then come to them, then turn up on the day, ask for bids, and collect their hefty commissions.

Why secret police, McCarthyism, Witch-hunts, and all other forms of mobbing exist

Unless we anticipate benefiting in some way from the superior talents and abilities of others, our emotions will tend to jealousy, envy, and a desire to harm our 'betters' to 'cut them down to size' and 'make them pay' for making us feel inadequate about ourselves, for reducing our own 'self-esteem' and relative social status. They make us feel less fortunate, by being more fortunate, if their superiority also brings them material benefits. This is why, given the chance, the masses tend to opportunistically take advantage of the chance to 'dob-in' their betters to whatever 'secret police' exist at the time. Most people will at least passively, and cheerfully, go along with the mobbing and victimization of colleagues whose superiority they resent.

Remember 'colleagues' represent 'competition' at some level. More competent colleagues make us appear less competent, even if we are not in competition for any particular promotion or position at that time. Competition is chronic, and so conflict is endemic to human relations. Any organization that claims it has no reported instances of workplace mobbing, is simply living in denial.

It would be like an organization made up of millions of men who never masturbate or have any form of sexual relief which never ever ever hears of a single man who engages in any sort of sexual exploitation of the children in their care. Of course I am referring to the Catholic Church.

The fact that the N.S.W Dept. of Education has not a single confirmed case of mobbing reveals that it is not taking its own official procedures seriously. I call this the 'Markus Test'. Any organization that claims to be having no problems is most likely merely in denial. It is likely to be the organization with the most problems.

Mobbing and cutting down the 'tall poppies'

Our society is defined by the unprincipled, opportunistic exploitation and reproduction of inherited inequality.

If everyone is doing it, then any adapted, well-adjusted 'team player', will 'go along to get along'. They will 'lauf-mit'. Their behavior will be defined as normal, natural, traditional, and if not ideal, then at least an unavoidable, 'necessary evil'.

If everyone is doing it, then I 'have to' do it too, so I exonerate myself from any responsibility for the outcomes of my actions, the world that is produced through, as a result of, my actions. I can blame the world. I can define myself as a 'victim' of 'the way of the world'. I can justify everything I do as necessary in an evil world. I can deny any responsibility for the inheritance I produce for the next generations, the costs I will be burdening them with.

Simply seeking alternatives is seen as a provocation. Actually behaving better, is a real 'slap in the face'. It undermines our own excuses, justifications, and rationalizations of our behavior as unavoidable, as necessary. Anyone behaving better than us makes it harder for us to deny our true response-ability. All definitions and meanings are reflexive. Strength and weakness are relative. We appear and feel superior around our inferiors.

We appear and feel stronger around the weaker, more ethical around the less ethical, more intelligent around the less intelligent. If others are behaving better than us, it challenges our definition of behaving badly as necessary and unavoidable. This undermines our excuses, rationalizations, and justifications. This undermines our positive self-definitions. This threatens to expose us to others as 'morally' inferior.

We appear and feel worse around 'our betters'. Thus they make us feel worse about ourselves. Reflexively we feel better about ourselves around 'our inferiors'. Around our equals we feel comfortable. Around our 'betters' we feel threatened. Their superiority threatens our sense of self-worth, our self-esteem. In more practical terms it threatens our social status, and the privileges and benefits attached to it. Our status is reflexive and relative. The better others appear to be, the worse we appear to be. Thus the simplest response is to 'cut down the tall poppies'. This is why mobbing is a defining behavior among humans, a defining characteristic of human nature.

How dare others try to keep to their principles and ethics and keep fighting for what they believe in! They are a constant reminder to their contemporaries that it is possible to be better. Their contemporaries make excuses to themselves, denying that it is possible to behave better, to 'stand up for justice', and all those admirable qualities that people pretend to admire, but really despise and feel threatened by.

On a more practical note, corrupt people 'trust' other people who they know can be 'bought' or 'co-opted' into their own particular games. People who can't be bought or won't play games are 'loose cannons'. They are a danger to every type of participant in every form of corruption. They could 'blow the whistle' on anyone's game at any moment.

It is not just the dominant hegemonic interests that fear having the whistle blown on them. As above, so below. Most people have something to hide, something they are not proud of, something they don't want their children to know about. The dominant hegemonic system of relations of the exploitation of inherited inequality would not survive, let alone thrive, unless it was reflexive of the general lack of principled behavior among the populations that provide it with its power. The exploited don't seek to eliminate exploitation per se, they merely wish to become the beneficiaries of it, the slave-masters, rather than the slaves.

Insecurity, tall poppies, and a loss of sympathy, a loss of hope for, the masses

The basic human psychology and condition is one of insecurity. The basic human response to insecurity is to cut others down to size, to cut down the tall timbers, the tall poppies. Few people like their betters. They make them feel less valuable, less acceptable, less approval-worthy, less important, less significant, less competent, less attractive, less able, less ethical, less whatever is good. The most able, attractive, competent, intelligent, innovative, ambitious, motivated, ethical, and so on, become the victims of bullying and the tall poppy syndrome.

Initially the more intelligent, capable, and ethical people feel a duty of care, of service, of responsibility, towards their less able 'comrades'. They feel the desire to help the less able. They feel an obligation towards them. They feel that they have the benefit of advantages that they should employ to the betterment of the less fortunate. Initially. However when they become the victims of those they started out wanting to help, they eventually lose their initial sympathy and empathy for them. It is hard to feel goodwill towards those who have deliberately set out to harm you, and especially those who have succeeded.

The unfortunate 'computer geek' is victimized at school. Could you expect the same software or internet multi-millionaire to feel goodwill towards their society? Is Bill Gates an exception? History is full of detailed gruesome stories of the horrific suffering of prophets of love and forgiveness at the hands of those they sought to enlighten and thus help.

Mobbing and tobacco in the Australian Army Reserve

During my service in the Army reserve, guys would come up to me in private and give me their addresses and so on, saying that they respected me for standing up for myself and what was right, even though it got me into a lot of trouble. However, they would then go on to explain that in public they had to go along with the others. I understood this, they said.

This relates to my trying to avoid being forced to consume other people's toxic tobacco products. The military had just brought in extensive bans on smoking in the vehicles and in the buildings. The military had always had smoking bans around ammunition dumps. There were signs everywhere. No matter how subtle my approach was, I was threatened to suffer in silence. I came back to Armidale from our Armored Personnel Carrier training in Singleton in the Officer's bus. They also began smoking. I couldn't avoid the smoke. I asked in an appropriately subtle manner, whether there were any regulations about this.

They stopped the mini bus, and threatened to leave me there if I mentioned anything to do with smoking again. When I arrived back at base the Warrant Officer directed me aside and told me that officers had claimed that I had insulted them. I said I hadn't. He said, revealingly, that if he found out that I had, I would be charged with insulting senior officers. That was a serious threat, as you could be jailed and heavily fined for such things in the Army Reserve. I considered that our conversation had begun with him telling me that Officers had already accused me of insulting them. Of course it was clearly an attempt to intimidate me, to threaten me, to keep me quiet.

I resigned from the Army Reserve soon after. I was prepared to put up with the hardships of training and the risk of being sent to war, but not for assholes who were poisoning me, and who made me wonder who I would want to shoot first in a war. Who were my real enemies? I was not prepared to end up in jail, or end up paying a large fine, for simple complying with the Army's own regulations. In hindsight I can say this was just another case of mobbing. Another opportunity denied me. Another waste of resources and unnecessary frustration.

How to deal with being a victim of injustice

I am still myself reflecting on how to respond to the injustice that I have been a victim of. I realize that the majority of people on this planet have experienced more injustice than I have. They are often not even aware of the injustices that they have suffered. They have of course been taught to blame themselves, or to just accept their experience as unfortunate, or as in the interests of some 'higher purpose' that will become clear one day. I am not so naive, ignorant or brainwashed.

The Doctrine of Karma states that victimizers will be punished in the next life. Of course a good Hindu should not want anything to suffer, to be punished. For the less faithful and loving amongst us, the doctrine of karma offers us the satisfaction that those who have harmed us will be punished in the next life. For their own good of course. Not that we have any ill will for anything in the universe.

Everything is me, everything is god, everything is one and the same, so we couldn't bear ill will to anything. Faith in karma could allow us to 'let go' of the consuming need for justice, for revenge, which can otherwise take up a lot of our energy and concentration, and can produce as much stress, hostility, dis-ease and harm as the actual injustices they are a response to. Probably more. So we should be open to this aspect of Karma. Of course it works in the interests of the perpetrators, who will thus never be held accountable for their actions.

The notion of letting go may have a net social benefit too. Revenge often breeds vicious cycles in which people respond to being victimized by attacking their victimizers. Many of these attacks will not be accepted as legitimate, and they will therefore be responded to with further attacks, breeding a vicious spiral of violence. Jesus is said to have professed the idea of forgiveness. When you forgive and let things go, they don't spiral out of control. However he also called for more justice and inclusion, and got pretty darn angry with the business people in the church, and even a poor fig tree, if we are to believe reports about him.

Revenge is sweet, it is said. The need for natural justice is basic to humans. When another has violated your rights, they have damaged your sense of security, the most important feeling to you. The need to redress grievances is reflexive of the fundamental need to feel secure. Having your rights or your body violated are all attacks on your security. When you avenge yourself, you regain your security, you assert your security once more. You are no longer a passive victim. You feel back in control again, secure. This cannot be under emphasized, without risking missing the point, and being responsible for violence yourself. It is in and of itself an act of violence to deny someone natural justice, for you are denying them what they need most, security.

The drive for revenge can distract you from your daily life. Don't forget that it might be you that the distracted victim accidentally runs over, or to whom they over-react when you make some innocent mistake. You are part of the whole they live in, and you benefit and suffer ultimately, when anyone else benefits or suffers. If you have ever felt the rage of injustice or humiliation, you will have an idea of the sort of violent emotional energy that is produced. As this energy has nowhere to go it either consumes the person, or they act it out on others, expressing their rage at a particular injustice in other seemingly unrelated situations.

It may get acted out neurotically, in other forms of aggression. Our culture encourages people to 'bottle their anger up', to deny or repress it, and of course it comes out one way or another. The actual act of repression or denial is itself destructive, destroying as it does, authenticity and (w)holiness. This results in a fracturing of the person, as they disapprove of, and therefore reject, parts of themselves, parts of their emotions and feelings, part of their experience, and therefore a part of reality. This results in various forms of schizophrenia, neuroses, and psychological disturbances, which we all pay for in one way or another.

Letting go will of course prevent the anger consuming you, and distracting you. But of course you can't really let go, it is always there, if you are not going to lie about it.

The optimal response, of course, is to transcend the experience. All experiences can be used as learning experiences. We can mobilize our resources and attempt to bring about changes that will prevent other people from

having to suffer as we have. The optimal response to injustice is to fight injustice in general. Ironically this is identified as a symptom of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

The problem with most people is that they will only change their behavior if they are held accountable for it. The society must insist that people be made accountable for their behavior. They must be allowed and assisted to recognize for themselves, and then admit to their victims, that they have harmed them. For this reason the legal system has to focus on justice, not on 'legal justice'. Legal justice is merely a game for lawyers. The legal system must be made into a public one. Access to legal resources is a fundamental element of Social Democracy. Like education and health, legal representation is a fundamental public good, a public right, that should not be allowed to be bought and sold like any other commodity.

The state cannot claim a moral monopoly on the right to threaten to and/or use violence, where it cannot guarantee that injustice is addressed and redressed in a transparent way. No-one can guarantee justice, but one can guarantee a transparent and fair process, one in which we genuinely seek to interrogate the facts, and make those responsible accountable. The victims should be compensated by the general public. The perpetrators must be held accountable, and must lose any power or privilege that they had abused in committing the injustice.

Exclusion of the protagonists from the community in general would only be necessary where the people posed a threat to that public. Otherwise perpetrators should lose the privileges that they either gained, or abused, from, or in, the act that they committed. This means that a corrupt official should lose their current position, and a thief must lose access to luxury goods of any kind for a period of time, for they do not deserve them.

There is then the question of what to do with or for those people who cannot control themselves, and would pose a threat to the public. We should not imprison people out of lust for revenge or out of hate, but out of necessity. We cannot allow further victims to be hurt. I'm not sure if most people want to punish people or rehabilitate them. The need for revenge is understandable, but we should not respond to it directly, but to the need for security that it is a desperate expression of.

Victims need to have the truth about their suffering told. They need to have their experiences validated and recognized. They need to feel that we as a society respect them and feel for, empathize, or at least sympathize, with what happened to them. They need to feel that what happened will not be tolerated, that it will not be allowed to happen again. Only then can the victim begin to really heal, to be reassured, to re-secure the sense of security that was violently stolen from them. The acts of violence are many in detail, but in general their real impact is the destruction of a person's feelings of security, the one thing that is fundamental to a person's sense of well-being and ease.

In my case, I believe that my persecutors should have to admit to the facts of what they have done, and be made aware of the damage they have done. They cannot be allowed to hold the offices whose powers they abused in the injustices they committed on me. They should be allowed to redeem themselves, but should not be allowed to keep any of the privileges of the particular office they held at the time of their victimization of me. They should all be put back on probation, and work at the level of a probationer in their fields. The principal should teach in her school, as a probationer. The district welfare officer should work as a probationer counselor in the district. The District superintendent should go back to teaching in his district, on probation. The Director General of Education should be employed on probation doing all the paperwork involved in investigating grievances.

The very least I should be compensated for is the loss of pay over the years I have been unable to teach, apologies from all those concerned, and reinstatement with full recognition for all the years I would have been teaching. I would accept that as an adequate gesture on behalf of the Education Dept. and the society that failed to 'protect' me, and then failed to provide any form of natural justice, let alone compensation. Under those conditions justice would be served as best it can.

Of course a Hindu may claim that I was being punished for things I did in my past life.

Some might claim that I should be grateful for the insight into injustice that being a victim provides. However I do not subscribe to views that we should not differentiate between better and worse. I believe that is denial, and that denial prevents social justice from being achieved.

I believe that social injustice is a problem that we have constructed, and which we can therefore eliminate. I further believe that we have the power to eliminate much of the natural injustice committed on us by nature, by genetics, by illness and natural disaster. But perhaps such experiences are karmic balances in the universal measure of justice, to compensate for the cruelty of humanity both to itself, and to other life forms.

If you believe in balance or harmony, then there is no escape from karma. You will have to suffer, or enjoy, as a consequence or product of the suffering you inflict on, and the joy you gift to, the world. If you want justice, then you have to subscribe either to the principle of forgiving and reconciling, of addressing injustice with justice, or subscribe to the principle of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Humanity has inflicted so much unnecessary suffering on both other animals, and itself, that it should hope that the principle of the universe is forgiveness.

This is what Jesus, the social prophet or fictitious allegorical character, meant when he encouraged us to 'judge not, lest ye be judged yourself'. 'Ye who have not sinned should cast the first stone'. Now that is a good one. A good stoning has no chance of beginning, let alone gathering momentum, if you impose that condition! Jesus is purported to have warned us that we will be judged by the same measure by which we judge others. There need be nothing mystical in this statement. Why should others behave any differently to us? How could we logically expect that? Sadly most people fear that by not throwing the first stone, others may take this as an admission of guilt! So in reality it is often the guiltiest who, trying to make a good impression, are the ones keen to throw the first stone.

I do not want to destroy the people who have sought to destroy me, I merely wish for justice. The suicide bombers do not desire to hurt others. They feel compelled to, in order to gain justice for their people, and for their families that have been killed, and whose futures have been stolen. No-one is giving the Palestinians their day in court. No one is even offering them real hopes of justice. They have been denied any access even to a mere process that might one day bring them justice. They are being humiliated and ruined by the Israeli military and government. If the rest of the world do not do their 'moral' duty in seeking justice for the Palestinians, then should the day come that one of them feels compelled to carry out 'terrorist' acts against us, we would have no 'moral' right to claim that we were innocent victims. They cannot get at the true perpetrators of the crimes against them, but we can, public opinion can, and we don't, so we are 'morally' culpable.

We will only find the truth when we seek it, and not merely seek to find convenient excuses and justifications, convenient lies and constructions. We all will benefit from the truth. A few will lose some privileges and powers that they have not rightfully earned, but we, as a community, will all benefit. Those with unearned privileges and powers will seek to convince us that it is in our interests to lie with them, and for them. Don't let them fool you, they are just using you. A peace without justice is not peace, it is the mere illusion of peace. There will never be real peace without real justice. You will never be able to feel secure so long as injustice exists. You or your loved ones will eventually fall victim, one way or another, to the consequences of injustice. There can be no injustice without consequence. That is a myth. The ones selling you that myth don't even desire peace. They need insecurity in order to keep you buying their insurance. It is a lie though, their insurance will not be able to protect you, or your loved ones. The only way to ensure security for those you care about, is through seeking justice for everyone. No one wins unless everyone wins. No-one can gain security when anyone is insecure.

The perpetrators of injustice must be held to account. They may have convinced themselves that they have done nothing wrong. They must be educated. At the very least transparency must be sought. One has to seek justice if you are to have any hope of ever finding it. Even so, there can be no guarantee of finding the truth. But what can be guaranteed is a transparent process which is actively seeking the truth. The facts that can be verified must be verified and made a matter of public record.

The ultimate violence is that of actively lying, of denying someone reality. How can anyone possibly be expected to feel secure if they are told that things that did happen did not, that their own perceptions are not to be

trusted? How can they trust people when people lie and distort the truth? How can anyone feel secure when they cannot trust anyone, and are told they cannot even trust themselves? The Nazis, The Stalinists, and the N.S.W Education Dept. have all abused a medical profession whose object is supposed to be to increase our wellbeing, to carry out injustices, to lie about reality, and destroy wellbeing.

It is of course the fault of doctors who will sell their souls and integrity to the highest bidder. Many practitioners have no ethics, and can be bought to say whatever their employer wants them too, whether their employer is a corrupt state, a defense force, or the Education Department with its 'HealthQuest'. Officers in the army have been defined as mentally ill because they laid charges of sexual harassment against their superior officers.

Of course superior officers don't sexually harass their subordinate officers, as there are rules against such behavior, which they wouldn't break. Therefore of course anyone who believes they were sexually harassed must be mad. Of course, there is no other explanation, case closed. In my case I was denied documents which proved that people had lied about me. My insistence on getting copies of a report that was never written is obvious proof that I am mad. There can be no other explanation. And no-one will ask eye-witnesses about the events, as why would you ask an eye-witness about something that never took place? Only a mad person would ask someone to report on something that never happened. You wouldn't would you? You're not mad, are you?

Dr Ornish provides compelling evidence that feelings of hostility, cynicism, frustration, dis-stress, dis-ease, hopeless-ness, distrust, and a general negative outlook on life and other people, all predispose a person to illness, lack of recovery from illness and accidents, and finally death. These are all feelings that the experience of injustice, of deliberate victimization, bring about in victims. In this sense such perpetrators should be held morally culpable and charged with manslaughter, or for behavior occasioning someone actual bodily harm or injury. A drink driver can be charged with manslaughter, even without ever having had any intention of hurting anyone. The Education Dept. employees who have inflicted so much suffering on me perhaps did not intend physically injuring or killing me, but the consequences of their behavior may be the same for me, as being run over by a drunk driver. They would also be morally culpable for the suffering of others who were injured or killed as a result of their initial actions and later cover up.

A note to my victimisers

I have the graciousness and humility to accept my own imperfection, and hence do not demand perfection from anyone else. However for the good of all, justice has to be sought, and the truth must be validated. What can be done to compensate victims must be done. Perpetrators must be held accountable. They need opportunities to own up to and atone for what they have done. Only then can victims be validated in the reality of their experience. Only then can perpetrators stop living in denial and self-deception.

You are hurting yourselves as much as me, and the future of humanity even more, by refusing to do the right thing. I do not want anyone punished. I seek the truth, and justice. Your failure to redress the violence you have committed must find expression one way or another, in violence that you yourself must ultimately be the victim of. I may transcend the violence, but this will not save you and your loved ones from the consequences of your behavior.

If you respond positively, then good will come of all of this. If you fail to, then you will reap the harvest of violence that you have sown. There is no avoiding it. It is the real Karma of the universe. What goes in must come out again. Good in, good out. Bad in, bad out. I can't force you to do the right thing, but I can warn you, and hope you will find yourselves compelled to do the right thing, and allow the truth to heal us. I say us, as you are fractured as long as you deny reality. You are no longer whole. This will have negative consequences for you.

Dealing with smug complacency

Responding with legitimate, justified, and completely appropriate anger and frustration in the face of smug complacency is a bad idea. You will be playing a losing hand. You are in an extremely vulnerable position. They have the whole hegemonic system of definitions behind them. You will gain nothing by expressing your feelings.

However you will offer them an excuse to express all the emotions humans tend to feel when their positive self-definition is threatened. Thus the non-smokers rights or animal rights lobbyist who reflexively reminds the smoker or non-vegan of their own crimes and injustice, provokes their defensiveness. They must thoroughly extirpate you to avoid having to confront the reality of their own cruelty and injustice.

They have to torture you till you confess that you are wrong, and that their actions are in fact good, just, and noble, and that they are good people, worthy of good fortune, justice, and the mercy of their gods or fate. They will welcome increasing the emotional tone of the interaction, so that they lower the intellectual tone, and simply mob you.

You cannot afford to be assertive, no matter how obviously compelling your argument and position is. Remember you are like the loner child facing down the school bully, with the rest of the school enjoying the chance to watch him beat you up. So don't give him any 'excuse', anything that could be defined as a provocation. Remain calm. Avoid any emotional language or gestures. Keep to your own agenda. *You* don't want to fight.

The bully only wants to fight because he anticipates it will all be one way. He realizes he has nothing to fear. He has the winning hand. He just wants you to give him any nominal 'excuse' to attack you. The rest of the school will back him up. They want to see someone else suffer. It is human nature to find that satisfying, especially when the 'victim' who 'obviously' 'thinks they are better than everyone else', as they are trying to be better. So let him insult you. Let him push you around a bit.

Remember what their agenda is. It is not your agenda. Once you see that the 'moral' tone or intellectual tone of the interaction is not productive, don't waste any more of your time or energy. Don't make yourself vulnerable to the mob. They will take advantage of any opportunity to harm you. They want to 'cut down the tall poppies' so they can be left to define themselves as good people, all the while committing the most heinous, cruel acts. As long as no-one forces them question themselves, whenever they look in the mirror they will see what they want to see, and their peers will all be in the same position. No-one is going to tell the emperor he is naked, as everyone is in the same boat.

This is not the right place or time to fight. You pick the time and place. Find a context in which you have a chance. Most novels, satires, and plays represent their author's attempt to make their point in an effective, often indirect way. Humor is often the chosen vehicle. You have to 'trick' people into facing the flaws in their own logic, in challenging their assumptions. By trick I do not mean deceive. What I mean is getting a message across despite the audience's unwillingness to consider challenging, inconvenient truths, despite all the forms of repression and censorship, psychological and social, that work against this in everyday life.

Anger is an energy

There are many things we have genuine reasons to be authentically angry about. However the problem is that people in the wrong tend to become angry when they are confronted with their error. So expressing anger and rage, no matter how justified, is rarely productive. It is used by others as an excuse to repress freedom of expression and freedom of association. For example the animal rights lobby and anti-smoking lobby both has legitimate reasons to be enraged.

The victims of mobbing and victimization have legitimate grounds to be angry with their smug, complacent victimizers, and a legal system that denies them any justice. However in most cases it is best not to express the emotion, and to focus on the facts. The expression of emotion is typically 'spun' to indicate a lack of reason. Angry people put others off. People don't feel comfortable around angry people, no matter how legitimate their rage. Emotion is conventionally defined as the opposite of reason. Worse, it makes it easier for victimizers to 'demonize' you. So while anger may come in useful in terms of 'flight or fight', in modern, civilized society, it should be expressed only among like-minded people.

In public it should only be expressed indirectly. Even behaving assertively will be defined as behaving aggressively, by those who do not wish to recognize the legitimacy of your arguments. So the less the emotional content of any plea, the better. And a tip, always define things in terms of your audiences self-interest. Of course it is a fact that many organizations only ever got any justice by first gaining attention to through terrorism. Sad but true. And most reformers had to break the laws prevailing at the time, in order to reform society, and change the system.

Revenge just as valid a desire as any other, and often at least as instrumental as it is affective

Revenge without any material benefit and at a potential or real cost to ourselves, is as rational as any other behavior. All actions are merely motivated by the desire to satisfy some urge, impulse, or desire, and revenge can be extremely satisfying. At its very basic it re-instates our sense of power a-la don't tread on me and reminds others to respect our rights. It imposes a cost on others to deter from future acts of aggression, victimization, abuse, and mobbing. However that said, the reasonable person moderates many of their desires, sacrificing their satisfaction in order to avoid the undesirable consequences of doing so.

History will reveal whether I avenge those who have committed acts of violence upon me. They have a right to know that I myself do not know what I will ultimately do. They could avoid me feeling compelled to avenge their acts by themselves validating my experiences, and seeking to compensate me for the costs their violence imposed on me. I hope I do not feel compelled to employ physical violence to gain natural justice. However they will have no 'moral' right to complain if I do. I have given them every chance to do the right thing. They still have the chance to do the right thing. Their behaviors were determined. Mine will be too. The question then is not one of 'morality'. It is a question of practicality. It is a question of 'moral' sentiment.

Transparency Vs denial and 'spin'

Where a perpetrator cannot deny what happened, because there were too many witnesses or documentation of their behavior, they can adopt another strategy. They cannot deny that something happened, but they can change the meaning or significance of what happened. They can find ways to justify it, defining it as necessary, or even positive. We refer to this action as spin-doctoring.

Where the person does not have this power of persuasion to manipulate public opinion, they can fall back on a third alternative. They did it, it was bad, but hey, everyone was or is doing it. This is an appeal to normative behavior, in an attempt to diminish individual guilt by redirecting it to a communal guilt. The community will not want to disapprove of themselves, so they will let it go as 'human nature', or as 'unfortunate'.

People will not want to be painted with the same brush that paints any individual as guilty, and so they won't paint anyone. They will turn a blind eye. We talk about the Criminal Nazi Dictatorship when we wish to deny general accountability for what happened in Germany. We talk about victory in the pacific when we don't want to directly refer to our current Japanese trading partners as former enemies. We try to distance ourselves from the evil others in the world. They are not us or ours, they are other.

The three monkeys come to mind. See, speak, and hear no evil. Mutual ignorance is feigned. I won't see your mistakes if you don't mention mine. And when the 'chickens come home to roost', we will all corporately deny any individual or collective guilt. We will all collectively feign naive ignorance. Our motto will be 'How could that have happened?' We will seek blame elsewhere. The terrorist is a deluded, mad, or evil person. The 'crazed' youth who goes on a shooting rampage is suffering mental illness. We will look everywhere and anywhere but at ourselves, at our own individual and collective guilt.

Most of the institutionalized violence in our world has been naturalized and normalized as just the way things are and have always been, the natural if sometimes unfortunate but unavoidable reality we live in. We often fail to see that some narrow vested interest groups actually benefit from this 'unfortunate' reality. We fail to interrogate the situation. Those that do benefit are perhaps not merely the beneficiaries of a co-incidence or convergence of interests, but actually active conspirators and colluders. They may be active constructors of that 'unfortunate' state of affairs, event, situation, condition, or system of relations. We don't want to know. Probably as we suspect that we ourselves are benefiting from the avoidable suffering of others. Few people would be among 'Those who walk away from Omelas' (Ursula Leguin).

It is part of the task of philosophy to interrogate situations, conditions, events, and the actors behind them. Their role is to seek the truth, to reveal whether injustice has been either denied, falsely re-defined as justified or actually good, or naturalized as unfortunate but unavoidable. We seek to make the situation transparent. We need to validate reality. We must reveal who stood to benefit and how, like detectives looking for motives. If we can identify motives and opportunities, we may just be able to identify, locate, and apprehend the perpetrators of the 'misfortunes' that plagues us and our world. We need to direct attention at the underlying reflexive sets of definitions and systems of relations that perpetuate injustice. We don't seek to victimize anyone. We do not wish to attack or punish anyone for the sake of it. We seek to find the truth.

We cannot force people to recognize the value of truth, to motivate them to tell the truth, especially where they have managed to convince themselves their lies are true, to deny the truth, or the meaning of the truth. We cannot expect people to act in ways that will reduce their privileges and power, or that will threaten the benefits they receive, even if we can convince them of the costs that others pay. They will only see the benefits, they don't care who pays the costs, as long as it isn't them, and preferably not theirs.

We may never be able to convince them of their real interests, to holistically enlighten them. It is hard to demonstrate to them that their perceived interests are mistaken. It is hard to persuade them that their real fundamental interests would be better served by giving up particular ways of defining things, and the systems of relations and institutions, even privileges and powers, that these definitions are reflexive and iterative of.

In other words we cannot force people to behave in their own enlightened self-interest. All we can do is construct the most compelling arguments we can, and make the situation as transparent as possible. We can only hope that enough people will become enlightened, and cease to seek exclusive, narrow, short-term vested interests at the expense of others, and their own long term holistic interests. Ideally we will all come to recognize our real interests, and that these are best served through principled behavior based on holistically enlightened reason.

Until enough people are enlightened to make public opinion a positive force we will have to be assertive and rock the boat. We will have to change the world for the unenlightened majority, in spite of their best efforts to stop us. It may be our mission here on earth, if the reality is that we do actually have one. We may be here to learn 'moral' reason and principled behavior, so that we can take up a higher level of consciousness, one with higher powers that are being withheld from us for our own good, until we can benefit from them, rather than be destroyed by them. We haven't yet learned to use the powers we already have for positive ends. We have managed to turn every power we have had up to now into a deficit, into a problem, into a source of suffering and misery.

Abortion: State subsidized, doctor assisted murder?

Judith Jarvis Thomson, in her 1971 paper 'A Defense of Abortion', argued that the pregnant woman is under no moral compulsion to support a fetus against her desire, using an analogy in which the reader is asked to imagine awakening to find that they are being used as a living dialysis machine for someone who has suffered renal failure. Jarvis Thomson argues that the right to consent outweighs the right to life in both cases. However how valid is the analogy? Many would argue that in the case of the dialysis patient, the woman has no responsibility for the patient's situation, whereas, by consenting to sexual relations, and failing to take adequate contraceptive measures, the woman has implicitly accepted responsibility for the possibility of conception.

It has been reported in the Australian media that over 100,000 abortions took place within a 12 month period. Keep in mind that Australia has a population of a little over 20 million. The public do not appear to be interested in debating the issue of abortion. The issue has been defined, in the popular media, and in the popular consciousness, as the woman's right to choose. The choice is defined as whether to carry a fetus to maturity, or to destroy it, and have it removed. The obscene phrase to get rid of it defines the popular language culture in relation to abortion. The public do not wish to take on any responsibility regarding the issue. Leaving it to someone else to decide, and therefore passing the ethical responsibility onto them, is the easiest way of not-dealing with the issue.

Doctors and feminists claim that abortions will take place whether or not they are legal, and that illegal abortions carry a higher risk to the woman. They therefore argue that it is better to make abortions legal. Abortion on demand. The woman's right to choose. These are the mottoes of the pro-abortion lobby. And demand it they do. In fact in a small country like Australia with a population of around 20 million people, official statistics indicate that around 100,000 abortions are carried out each year.

Even worse, a reasonably large percentage of these abortions are actually carried out in the third trimester. Reasoned arguments concerning the ethics of abortion tend towards the question of when is a fetus a person. Attempts at defining the point at which a fetus becomes a baby, let alone a person, are extremely tenuous and often pure speculation, if not convenient, often even disingenuous, specious sophistry.

Religious fundamentalists often take the position that it is 'immoral' to destroy a fertilized egg, even though Thomas Aquinas placed the time of 'ensoulment' much later. A fertilized egg does not elicit any more empathy from me than a sperm or ovum. I don't find any scientifically compelling grounds to consider that a fertilized egg can suffer. The fertilized egg has the potential to develop, but has no potential to experience anything, as far I can judge.

If a woman does engage in sexual activity of any kind, then she has the ethical obligation to ascertain, immediately, whether she has conceived or not. Tests should be developed that allow this to be determined with certainty. No 'moral' position need be taken with regards to engagement in sexual activity per se. However it is fully irresponsible for people to engage in sexual activity without taking the necessary precautions.

Day after pills can terminate pregnancies well before the fertilized egg can develop any sort real sentience. The ideal is of course to prevent conception. Termination of pregnancies using day after pills are only the least problematic of responses to unwanted conception.

Once the fertilized egg begins developing into a fetus, any definition of a discrete point in its development at which we can define the fetus as capable of suffering is scientifically arbitrary. No-one can say with scientific confidence at which point a fetus becomes sentient. Video footage of a fetus at 12 weeks elicits definite empathy. What we see is clearly a baby, with many of the distinct behaviors we associate with a baby. We can see arms and legs and facial features. We see the fetus sucking its thumb, and yawning.

We keenly feel the need to protect this unborn baby. It is clearly a baby. It is in the woman's womb, but it is clearly a baby. If it was outside the womb, we would rush to protect it. Many unborn babies are aborted at a stage in their development where they would survive in an intensive care station. In fact many premature babies are less developed than babies that are aborted. We invest huge amounts of resources and care fighting to keep one baby alive, while allowing another, with even greater chances of survival, to be aborted.

I am a philosopher, and I am aware of the rigors that need to be applied to arguments. When I make the following statement, I am fully aware of my obligations to intellectual rigor. I am not making it out of some sentimental or reactive position, let alone any fundamentalist religious one. Abortion is legally sanctioned, and medical profession assisted, murder. Fact.

It would be convenient to find some way around stating this. Why? Because knowing that unborn children are being murdered forces me into a situation that is totally untenable. I am to sit here quietly while thousands of unborn children are being murdered. I would that it was otherwise. I wish it were not true. I wish the unborn fetuses had no capacity to suffer or experience their murder.

There is absolutely no compelling scientific argument that a developing fetus does not suffer and experience its murder. Those who wish to think so are living in denial, or self-deception, for the sake of their convenience, and to deny their responsibility. I have nothing against euthanasia. I am even compelled to accept that in many cases it may be more humane to kill a person, than to force them to endure their lives, due to the quality of that life for them. In some cases it may be more humane to kill an unborn child than to force it to endure a life of suffering. If we are going to err on the side of anything, in the absence of compelling scientific argument about the nature of the development of consciousness and capacity to suffer in the fetus, then we must err on the side of the fetus. Or we should admit that we are willing to kill unborn babies, when they are 'inconvenient'. It is of course obscene that a doctor is not legally able to assist me in having a good death, as an informed and rational decision, but they are legally able to kill an unborn child, who it is reasonable to assume actually wants to live.

It is, at best, a relatively painless form of murder, but it is murder. If you can't accept this position, then you should be 'morally' and physically outraged at the notion of abortion. If you accept abortion, then you must accept this position. Abortion is, in the best of instances, no more and no less than perhaps relatively pain-free homicide.

If it is not painless, then abortion is one of the most cruel and horrific forms of murder imaginable. Of course we don't want to imagine it. The thought is too horrific to contemplate. By condoning it we are 'morally' responsible for it. We are co-conspirators. We are accomplices. If we can't accept this position, then we cannot accept abortion. Just because murder does and will take place even if we make it illegal, we don't feel that that is a compelling argument to de-criminalize, or even legalize it, let alone assist the murderers. Of course if we made murder legal, it could be carried out much more humanely and efficiently. Doctor assisted murder would reduce the suffering of the victim. In order to encourage such 'harm minimization', the state should subsidize the action.

People would not have to sneak around and get 'shonky' murders done, murders in which they themselves get hurt. If someone has to die, it's logical to minimize the damage. Better that just the intended victim should die than that the murderer should get hurt in the process. This is only rational. This is harm minimization. We will never eliminate the need to murder. Some people will murder even if we tell them not to. Murder will happen, this can't be denied. The best we can do is minimize the harm.

If you can't accept this position, then you can't support legal abortion. What is the difference between legal, doctor assisted, government subsidized, murder and legal, doctor assisted, government subsidized, abortion? Really, the only difference is that you feel vulnerable to being murdered. You do not logically fear being aborted. As humans we protect our own interests, as we perceived them. We protect our right to not being murdered. We don't want our loved ones to be murdered either, generally.

Of course it might sometimes be more convenient to murder them, say, when we are bored with them, and divorce would be expensive. Or our children might not be performing the roles we intended for them, yet we are still obliged to spend resources on them. It would be more satisfying if we could start again, and hope that the next crop is more satisfying and rewarding. Why not wait until they are say 5 or 6, see if they are likely to develop as we would like, and if not, just give them a painless injection and get back to the baby making. Why invest any further in a failing investment? We're never going to recover our 'sunken costs'. They are a bad investment. Maybe the next crop will show more potential. Surely it makes more sense to get back to the drawing board. Unwanted children are a real

burden, a real inconvenience. Surely you'll agree. Anyway, they aren't fully developed persons yet, are they? They couldn't even survive on their own, could they?

Of course you might say that there are lots of couples who can't have any children at all. They would be ecstatic to have even your second rate off-casts. Why not give them the kids you don't want? In the case of the unborn baby, you have to carry the unwanted thing inside you, and that is really inconvenient. It gives you morning sickness, and back pain, and maybe bladder problems, not to mention stretch marks. You have to carry it around in you. It gets in the way of lots of activities. You'd have to endure all that, in order to provide the family who can't have kids with someone to love and care for, someone to bring real joy and meaning to their lives. You'd have to make some sacrifices for up to 9 months.

Let the families who can't have kids instead tie up thousands of dollars of medical resources trying vainly to have children. Let them go without kids. Let them live unfulfilled lives. You have no obligation to them, do you? You can legally kill your unborn child, and no-one will know, let alone judge you. In fact lots of other women will applaud your behavior as self-empowered and contributing to the freedom of women from a patriarchal society. Killing unborn babies is liberating and empowering for women. You have the right to choose.

Of course it is more convenient just to get rid of the thing. And seeing as it's so easy and socially acceptable, even laudable, and politically 'empowering', then why bother using contraception at all. Easier just to get rid of any unplanned conception. Sadly this seems to be the trend. In a recent television debate, women made it clear that they often felt bad about having gotten rid of it. It was clear that we were supposed to think that it is ok then, just because they felt bad, rather than enthusiastic, about having terminated their pregnancies. It became clear that once a woman had an abortion, she was likely to have more and more. This is disturbing, indicating that it became easier each time, and that the women came to use abortion as a means of late contraception.

No-one was interested in hearing the details of how abortions were carried out, especially later term ones. Every time someone in the audience raised this question, or sought to provide details, they were cut off by others, including the moderator, who claimed that the details of how abortions were carried out were irrelevant, and even in some way sensationalization. It is clear that people do not wish to be confronted with the horrors of abortion. They wish to remain ignorant, to remain in denial. They would never even allow television stations to broadcast, before every mealtime, animals being slaughtered for the breakfast, lunch, and dinner-tables of viewers. That would be 'sensationalism'. The suffering of innocent victims is 'irrelevant'.

It is extremely foreboding that up until recently doctors claimed that even young babies couldn't feel pain. It was believed that their nervous systems hadn't developed to the stage of being able to experience pain. Therefore when they performed open-heart surgery on infants they didn't use any anesthetic. The infants didn't cry out in pain, so the doctors assumed they didn't feel any. It is therefore reasonable to assume that many unborn children were simply vacuumed out of the woman's body without first being killed with a lethal injection. Remember that in later term terminations, the unborn child must first be cut into pieces before they can be vacuumed out of the woman's body. This is why no-one wanted to talk about it during that television talk show. This is why no one wants to talk about it per se. It is a horrific process. No-one can know for sure whether the fetus 'experiences' this, or how much pain and horror it must endure before it is 'terminated'.

Of course where there is a conflict between the survival of the child, and the survival of the mother, we have a real ethical dilemma. I will not take any position regarding that situation. It will be for the mother and family to decide which life to give the highest priority. Everything should be done to save both the child and the mother. I myself would not want my wife to die. I would sacrifice the baby. I wouldn't kid myself that I hadn't done so. Life is risk (*Leben ist Risiko*). Everything will die one day. I would value the life of my wife over that of the uncertain life of the child.

No court has the right to impose a decision upon the mother and family in such circumstances. However the great majority of abortions are carried out merely because the unplanned pregnancy is inconvenient to the woman. Even very late term abortions are carried out for these reasons. Rather than carry the child to full term, often merely

meaning a few months further inconvenience, women can chose to have the child killed. I am not sensationalizing anything. I am simply stating the current state of affairs.

Rather than carry the child a few more months, and then giving it to a family who would adore it, the woman can simply have a doctor kill it, cut it into pieces, and vacuum it out. The unborn child was at the same stage of development as many of the premature babies currently being cared for in intensive care wards. We, as a society, are investing millions of dollars of medical resources in trying to keep premature babies alive, babies with terrible medical conditions who have little chance of surviving, let alone a good quality of life, while at the same time paying for women to kill perfectly healthy unborn babies.

If it is ok to kill a late term unborn child, one which would survive in intensive care, then why is it not ok to kill an infant, one who cannot survive without its mother's constant attention? Neither can survive on their own. I myself can not survive on my own, and I am a fully grown adult. It is one reason why I often yearn for euthanasia. The argument that it is ok to kill something that can't survive on its own is totally fatuous and specious. Very few of us could survive alone, without the help of our fellow humans.

I have not approached the issue from any dogmatic position. I have approached the situation from a scientific perspective. I believe anyone should have the right to die when and how they see fit. We are all going to die sooner or later. We can't actually make the decision that we will die, all we can do is chose the time and place and manner of our deaths. Most of us will suffer terribly in the last days, weeks, months, even years of our lives. We will be forced to endure that suffering. Life is risk, full of suffering, and you will ultimately die.

However only you should determine whether your life is worth living. You should have the right to decide. No-one else. Do you get it? I don't have the right to decide when and how you should die. You don't have the right to decide how and when I should die. You shouldn't be allowed to murder me, nor to force me to endure a life I don't want to live. The 'mother' has no right to kill her unborn child, except in 'self-defense'.

No sane person could consider the notion that 'I have a *legal* right to do with my body as I like' is valid. *Unless* you facilitate Euthanasia in the same way you facilitate abortion. *Unless* you allow the free sale of every drug that the people clearly want to consume. *Unless* you eliminate conscription.

And then that right would be limited to what you do with YOUR body. You would not be allowed to force other people to consume your tobacco smoke. You would not be allowed to work or drive a motor vehicle while under the influence of your drug of choice. You would not be allowed to euthanise other people.

When you have sex you take a certain risk. That is the risk of conception. You should take that risk seriously. All rights incur obligations towards others. We can only accommodate freedom for individuals, if those individuals accept their reciprocal obligations towards each other, and not-yet-persons.

A woman's right to decide?

It has of course become politically incorrect to have feelings of rage, anger, or horror in relation to abortion. It is generally politically incorrect to be enraged by injustice. A balanced person is expected to just accept things as they are, and go along to get along. You'll never be aborted, so hey, relax, take it easy. No-one is forcing you to make any ethical decision, or take on any responsibility. It is, after all, a woman's right to decide, isn't it? How dare anyone tell anyone else what to do with their bodies, with their unborn children. If you can't see it, you don't have to worry about it, right?

No-one is going to hold you responsible for the murder of hundreds of thousands of unborn babies. And hey, it could be your wife or girlfriend or next casual sexual encounter that finds herself with an inconvenient conception. You wouldn't want to be faced with that responsibility, would you?

Is a right to life position untenable? It is unfortunate that the same people who are antiabortion are also anti-contraception. Now that is not a tenable or fair position. Everyone has the right to sexual freedom, to freedom of sexual expression. Everyone has a right to de-couple the sexual experience from conception or reproduction. It is counterproductive, and not in the interests of eliminating abortion, to deny people access to free, discrete, and effective contraception. If you take the position that every sperm and egg must be protected, and that contraception is a sin, and that a fertilized egg is a child, then you contribute to the situation in which unborn children are going to be killed.

The only workable solution is to make contraception free and accessible, to provide a means of testing for conception as soon as possible after intercourse, and a free and accessible day after pill, to terminate the conception before any harm can be done. Any other position is irresponsible, or too unrealistic.

The most dangerous place on this planet for a human being is currently inside the womb of a woman.

In addition to planned abortions, current research suggests that fertilized embryos naturally fail to implant some 30% to 60% of the time. Of those that do implant, about 25% are miscarried in the first two to three weeks after pregnancy can be detected.

No unwanted conception need ever take place. Contraception can prevent unwanted conception. Where such measures fail, then no unwanted conception need proceed past a day or two. Day after pills can achieve this state. No woman should ever be allowed to kill an unborn child, just because doing so would be convenient. The first two conditions can easily be attained. Contraception and day after pills can prevent the third from becoming an issue at all.

Only if we, as a society, provide for contraception and day after pills, do we have a 'moral' right to compel any woman who has failed to take advantage of these options to carry her child to term. The few unwanted children who were conceived would be cherished and adored by the thousands of couples who can't conceive no matter how hard they try. Of course the women will need to be compensated for their labor and inconvenience.

If you deny women contraception and day after pills, and to compensation for continuing with unwanted pregnancies, then you are equally 'morally' responsible for the murder of unborn babies as the women who choose abortion, and the doctors who carry out the abortions.

This discussion is not about judging people, it is about eliminating totally avoidable suffering. It is about preventing people from finding themselves in a position where state subsidized, doctor assisted murder appears to be the best response to unwanted pregnancies.

Unfortunately many of those against abortion are also against contraception. It is sad that so much totally avoidable human misery is produced and re-produced by superstitious dogma. Only when we recognize The Realities Of Our Nature, And The Nature Of Our Realities, will we be in a position to avoid such completely avoidable tragedies, and make the most of the lives available to us.

If you believed we are conceived, and die, and are conceived, and die, over and over again, then would you have a different view of abortion?

Remember that the introduction of Eugenics would all but relegate abortion to history. It would only ever arise as an issue where the health of the mother was threatened by carrying a child to term.

Abortion, cooking lobster, and the nature of pain and suffering

Imagine the following. You are given an injection so that you can feel absolutely no physical pain whatsoever. You can only feel pressure and so on, but no actual pain. You are then cut up into pieces. During this process you die. Or you are thrown into boiling water. You die as you boil. Are you any less horrified by the prospect, knowing that you won't actually feel any pain? We are told that a fetus or a lobster does not have the capacity to feel pain.

There is no way of really knowing this for sure. Surgeons did perform open heart surgery on infants on a regular basis, assuming, wrongly, that the infant's nervous system and so on was not developed enough to experience pain. It was only recently that the assumption was demonstrated to be an erroneous one. Doctors have recently claimed in the media that they are confident that the fetus cannot experience the pain of its death during an abortion. How can they be so confident? Let us go back to our mind experiment. Does the fact that you won't experience physical pain during being cut up, or boiled alive, make the prospect any less horrific to you?

Inconsistent definitions of 'person' at the start and the end of our lives

Consider when a person is defined as legally dead. Is it after brain death? It is clearly not a question of our ability to survive independently, as many people would not be alive if not for ongoing medical intervention. However just because they are dependent on life-support machines or less heroic measures, we still define them as 'persons' and ascribe them all the legal protections of being 'persons'. To kill them would be considered murder. However when it comes to defining when a fetus becomes a person with legal rights and protections, most people adopt an arbitrarily different position.

If we adopted the indicator of brain activity, then as soon as we could measure brain activity in a fetus we would be compelled to grant it a right to life, and protection from being 'aborted'. Abortion would thus be defined as murder. It is clearly not a question of being able to survive independently, outside the womb, as we have already clarified that this cannot be a criteria. If it were, it would automatically deny millions of aged, and otherwise dependent people any legal rights. How perverse it is that we deny a fetus the right to life, but deny an adult the right to die.

Only an individual can suffer

As a philosopher I am motivated by the fact that billions of people, over potentially thousands of generations, may suffer if I don't work hard at what I do. However it occurred to me during my long, deep philosophical meditations, that only the individual can experience anything. To talk about billions of people experiencing something is misleading. Only the individual can suffer. This recognition helps me deal with my awareness of how much suffering occurs in the world. It eases my desperation and sense of urgency at saving billions of people and animals from unnecessary suffering. Consciousness, awareness, is an individual phenomenon.

I may be saddened by the loss of someone else. I may suffer to see someone or something I care about suffering. But only an individual can suffer pain or enjoy pleasure. A group is just a concept. A species is a concept. A species cannot suffer. Only the individual members of it can suffer. Whether one person or a million die in some incident, only one person can die, only one person can suffer. This relieves me of an impossible burden. If I fail in my quest, only one person will suffer. It helps me maintain some composure.

Each person suffering will die within 100 years. If I fail, then it is really only 100 years of consequence. Once they are dead it will be over, whether I failed or not. Unless, as I fear, life is recurring, and hence eternal.

It is the reason why we must, as a collective, focus on the individual as the referent of interests in our cost-benefit analyses. We can never justify sacrificing an individual to that mystifying entity known as 'the common good' or 'the greater good'. We cannot justify sacrificing an animal to the interests of medical research.

We cannot, as our sole referent of interest can only be the individual. Once we cease protecting and furthering the interests of each individual, we cease to have a *raison d'être*. You cannot calculate costs and benefits for a concept. Thus to say that we will sacrifice the interests of a real person for the interests of a concept, is absurd.

All cost-benefit analyses which claim to be sacrificing the individual for 'the greater good', really reduce to mere opportunistic exploitation. The person uttering the sentence is really referring to their own interests which they intend sacrificing another individual to. So whenever you hear someone speaking of 'the greater good', they are invariably speaking about their own, individual interests. Those with the greatest power manage to have their own individual interests defined as 'the greater good'.

Any action that sacrifices the interests of the individual ceases to be in the interests of solidarity and justice. Each individual's interests must be considered equal. No-one's interests can be denied. Otherwise we lose our ethical, principle driven direction. Justice must be treated as indivisible. If it is not in the interests of everyone, then it is not in every individual's interest, and therefore it is not in the interests of universal justice and optimisation.

As Mohamed wrote in The Koran, when you kill one person, you kill all of humanity. The same sentiment is poetically expressed in Ernest Hemingway's 'For Whom the Bell Tolls'.

Like Jesus, we have to see that it is the individual that matters. It is the individual's behavior that is most important. He expressed this with his prime imperative to 'treat the lowest among us as if they were Jesus himself'. He didn't talk of grand political schemes or of 'the greater good'. He talked about the 'least among us', that individual that we should treat as if he were that other individual, Jesus. Jesus' message, was, after all, a personal one. It was about individual responsibility. It was about individual action. His 'good Samaritan' parable was about an individual helping another individual.

Thus we could never sacrifice the individual good to some illusory 'greater good'. The greatest good is the good of the individual, of the 'least' individual among us. Now that is what I call a 'categorical imperative'. Imagine how the world would look if we adopted a 'zero tolerance' policy towards inequality and injustice.

The dangerous 'logic' of sacrificing the interests of the individual for some 'greater good'

Only an individual can experience anything. Only an individual can suffer or enjoy. The notion of 'the greater good' is mystification at one level of composition. When we 're-ify' a group as a thing, say a nation, an ethnic group, a 'race' (sic), or even an 'institution', we are ascribing it properties that only an individual rightly possesses. In doing so we construct something which can be adopted as a referent in 'cost-benefit analyses'. The 'interests' of the group as a thing can then be used as a referent.

A particularly slippery and sinister logic develops from this act. According to this logic we come to speak of the interests of the group as having priority over the interests of any one particular member of it, any particular individual. In this way a logic ensues in which it seems reasonable to sacrifice the interests of some members of the group for the interests of this constructed 'greater whole'. Mathematically seen, it is perfectly logical and reasonable to sacrifice the lives or well-being of a minority of the group, to serve the interests of the group 'as a whole'.

The fallacy of this is the fallacy of composition of defining groups as things in themselves, as potential referents with interests in cost-benefit analyses. However a group does not actually exist at all. It is an artifact of a particular way of defining.

In addition to this, the privileged at the 'top' of the 'group' invariably define their interests, and have them so identified by the group membership in general, as the interests of the group.

When we recognize that only an individual can experience anything, and so have rights and interests, we will only calculate the costs and benefits for individuals. We would then have to justify sacrificing the interests of one individual for the interests of another. In the absence of mystifying notions of the group as a thing with interests, there would be no logic to sacrificing one individual for another. There would be no 'greater good', just the good of the particular individuals whose interests we are considering promoting and sacrificing.

There would be no logic in sacrificing one individual for another. The mathematics are clear. 2 people, 2 interests. Anyone seeking to justify sacrificing one person's interests in the interests of another would have to claim that one person was of more value in some way, or that their interests were more or less worthy of consideration. Of course religions never have any problems supplying mystifying ideologies to this end, but the real benefit of demystifying the situation is the transparency of the final decision.

One person may still end up being sacrificed in the interests of another, but it will be clear that such a thing had taken place. In the long term this would have repercussions.

Each individual would tend to feel insecure living under such a system of definitions and relations. Eventually they would insist that no individual should ever be sacrificed, against their own wishes, in the interests of another.

Our legal codes basically reflect a movement towards the recognition of individuals over and above their social, economic, ethnic, race (sic), religious and/or gender affiliations/identifications/group memberships. Zionism, Nazism, slavery and racial/sexual/religious discrimination are all the results of the reification of groups as things with interests, as rightful referents in cost-benefit analyses. These groups define minorities within them, and other groups, as less worthy of having their interests considered than the dominant group.

Thus it is naturally considered that their interests can rightfully be sacrificed in the interests of the dominant group, whose interests are defined reflexively as 'the greater good'. In this way racism, sexism and 'species-ism' all define the exploitation of the weaker, those with poorer inheritances, as meritocratic. In cost benefit-analyses they will be seen to carry less weight. Thus their interests will be sacrificed to 'the greater good'.

In the end the interests which will be defined as 'the common good' are, in descending magnitude, the interests of the elites, the privileged classes, the capitalists, the upper middle-classes, the middle classes, and even the

working classes, all of whom benefit from the exploitation of mystifying ideologies and the exploitation of the social groups such ideologies define as 'inferior', 'excluded', and legitimate victims, even deserving targets of, exploitation.

To put it simply, when we 're-ify' a group as a thing with interests, it is logical to sacrifice 1000 members for the greater good of the 1000,000 members of the group. When we define the individual as the only valid referent of interests (which is the only scientifically valid way to proceed), such a logic dissolves. The action of sacrifice becomes a transparent one. What we are left with is the exploitation of inequality by the more powerful individuals among the members of most powerful hegemonic groups exploiting some less powerful individuals, with their own interests as the referent or motivation.

However, this said, there is still a case for sacrificing the few for the many, where this is based on informed consent and voluntary participation. In some situations the statistical chances of any particular individual surviving are increased by participating in some random process, such as the 'drawing of straws' to select the small number who will then 'voluntarily' sacrifice themselves.

If everyone is likely to die if no-one 'volunteers', then the odds are better if some random process is put in place to select those who will be sacrificed. Ideally this would be based on informed consent and voluntary participation in the 'ballot'. Say some invading ruler has said they want 1000 volunteers to sacrifice to their god, or they will kill everyone. In this case you are statistically less likely to die by consenting to such a ballot. The odds are 'pre-determined' and therefore it is in each individuals' interests to participate in the game. In this sense they are not motivated to ultimately sacrifice themselves, but to save themselves.

There may be some corollary with the famous Monty Hall Problem. Most people, myself included, at first find the 'solution' to the 'problem' to be 'counter-intuitive'. We are given 3 doors to open. Behind one is a car. Behind the other two are goats. Assuming a cultural preference for cars over goats, we are given the chance to open one door, and win the car. We make our choice. The game-show host then generously opens one of the remaining 2 doors, to reveal a goat. Even more generously he allows us to change our selection, if we want to. Oh decisions, decisions! So what would you do? Would you stay with your original selection? Or would you change to the other remaining door? Take a moment to consider before reading on.

Most people, myself included, assume that it makes no difference whether we change our selection or not, as either way there are two doors, and so logically we have a 50-50 chance either way. Or do we? At that time we selected our door, the odds of the car being behind our chosen door was one in three. The odds of the car being behind one of the two other doors was two in three. You see the point yet? Once the game-show host opens one of the other two doors he has increased the odds of the car being behind the remaining door from one in three, to two in three. So it is clear that the odds are that that remaining door will have a car behind it. These odds were determined before the game show host limited the selection to only two doors, and they remain in force. I suspected that any counter-intuitive 'surprise' in the solution to the problem would have to do with assigning 'collective probabilities' to the remaining door.

Now back to the call for 'volunteers'. Of course we should be very wary of being misled concerning the original odds. Many politicians will claim that some eminent invasion is underway, and therefore present the argument that it is in our personal interests to volunteer to risk our lives overseas, to 'prevent' or merely 'deter' the imminent total annihilation. They will tend to go so far as to claim that our 'way of life' is under threat. We'd better secure our access to oil and gas or we'll be ruined, all of us. We are addicted to oil. The Republican Administration, the 'Oil and Gas Junta' need you! We're looking for brave young, altruistic volunteers like you to defend our interests, our 'way of life'. Of course you assume that 'our' mean yours, rather than 'theirs'!

Slavery

We can hardly expect a general recognition of the rights of animals to their freedom, and freedom from horrific exploitation, given that human slavery had been common and legal for thousands of years. It is still practiced among some African ethnic groups. It had been almost universally defined as acceptable up until a mere few hundred years ago. It was only banned in some Arabic cultures as late as the 1920s. Thousands of people fought and died defending their right to own and exploit other humans. The British had banned slavery long before it was banned in the U.S. The British laws against slavery may have been a great motivating factor in what Americans refer to as their 'war of independence'. Slavery would have been outlawed in the U.S if it had remained a British colony. We will see that the defenders at the battle of the Alamo also had far from admirable motives.

Many economists would argue that slavery lost vogue in general not on ethical grounds, but because it became cheaper to employ 'free' labor than to house and feed slaves. Free workers did not need to be fed and housed when they were not needed to work on the farm. Free workers were more motivated as they had at least the impression that they could benefit from their efforts. They worked harder and longer in the expectation they would earn more. A general increase in the availability and desperation of workers willing to work under even horrific conditions meant that employers did not have to import or buy slave labor. They could rent local labor more cheaply and flexibly.

Slaves became, therefore, less and less attractive to employers, at least in industrialized sectors of the economy. This may account for why the states of the more Industrialized north of the later U.S were in favor of banning slavery, while the less Industrialized, much more agricultural and labor intensive economies of 'The South' fought against any such moves. It would have been hard to find people to choose to work cheaply in such hot, humid, rough conditions. The North had no such problems. They enjoyed a massive influx of cheap, willing migrant workers.

Of course racism played a great part in 'legitimizing' slavery in the 18th and 19th century, but the reason African slaves were imported to the colonies and 'The South' is that they were genetically resistant to malaria. They were imported mostly for agricultural labor in sugar, tobacco, and cotton plantations. These plantations were the source of great wealth for their colonial owners, and great misery for the unlucky slaves.

I remember a film in which Marlon Brando used the analogy of prostitutes and wives to persuade the colonial rulers of a plantation island to consider supporting a slave uprising that seemed imminent. The men could all agree that prostitutes were better value for money than wives. The point of the analogy was that it was cheaper and more rewarding to rent people, than to own them.

In the past, around a quarter of the population of the U.S were enslaved. At the moment, around a quarter of the population of the U.S lives in miserable poverty. There is little difference in the life experience of the two groups.

If young men and women volunteered in high enough numbers, and provided the Military-Industrial-Complex with the muscles, brains, and talents it required to prosecute its wars, then there would be no need for conscription. This is perfectly analogous to the abolition of slavery. The reason we still have conscription is that, as soon as the beneficiary classes cannot find volunteers, they immediately re-instate slavery. In other words we are effectively still slaves. All of us. Our freedom is only an illusion. A temporary one. Read my new book '911 (5 minutes to midnight) if you doubt me now.

Remember the Alamo (forget it was about fighting for slavery)

There were some real revolutionaries in Texas who wanted to accede from the Mexican federation for idealistic reasons. These were the sort of ideals that movies about the Alamo get all emotional and sentimental about. However, these few were actually persecuted by the Texans after Texas was accepted into the U.S. These were the real heroic figures of the revolution.

The main protagonists in the final move to secession, however, were motivated by more sinister, base, and contemptible objectives. In fact the Mexican government which had emerged from a popular Socialist revolution, had banned slavery within its federation. The federal government was not tyrannical, and the Texans weren't overtaxed or exploited in any way, at the time of the Alamo.

Earlier revolutionaries, Spanish speaking immigrants like the bulk of the Mexicans, had fought against the federation for autonomy and independence. The later immigrants were cotton farmers from the U.S, who were economic immigrants, driven out of the U.S by high land prices. The land in Mexican Texas was more affordable. They farmed this cheap land with slaves they brought with them. These more recently arrived U.S Texans were appalled when the Mexican Federal Government outlawed slavery within its federation. This would mean that they would have to pay their cotton farmers, or farm their land themselves. This would mean being reduced to being farmers, rather than plantation owners. This was the motivation for the Alamo.

The infamy doesn't end with that. Once Texas had been admitted to the U.S as a slavery state, the non-Hispanic Texan slave owning population turned on the original rebels who had aided them in gaining secession from the Mexican Federation, victimizing them and driving them off their lands (the Hispanic's land that is). The Texan saying went 'If a Hispanic farmer won't sell you his land, then his widow will'. The real heroes were forced to sell off their own lands extremely cheap. The alternative was death. So much for the romantic film versions. The main heroes in that infamous battle were slave owners, fighting for the right to abuse and exploit other humans, against a popular Socialist Federal Government fighting to eliminate slavery.

The truth is hardly suitable 'good versus evil' material for an American Western. Like most Hollywood movies, what you get to see is pure propaganda produced in the interests of the hegemonic system and its beneficiaries. Producers either prostitute themselves, or their interests converge with this beneficiary class.

Americans seem to forget that they were in fact a penal settlement for British convicts well before Australia was. In fact Australia was settled due to the defeat of the British in the war of independence (the first civil war on), and the need for a new destination for convicts who would have otherwise been sent to the U.S. After being a penal colony, the next most defining features of the U.S were slavery, and the dispossession and genocide of the Native Americans.

And don't forget that the first New World Order, that of Rome, was founded mostly upon the founders of Rome welcoming, as free citizens, any criminal who was seeking 'refuge' from prosecution in their own lands. In other words the bulk of the original Romans were criminals.

The mass enslavement, rape, and genocide, perpetrated by the Jews as part of the Canaanite holocaust

Germany has built a huge and expensive monument to the Jewish holocaust that their grandparents perpetrated on the Jews. The homosexuals, social democrats, 'communists', and anyone else murdered during the Nazi regime barely gain a mention in the media. Their lobby groups are less powerful. That holocaust has been the subject of innumerable films and debates. The current generation of Germans have been forced to feel guilty for the sins of their grandparents and great grandparents for decades. It is of course appropriate that the truth be told about that shameful past.

It is also appropriate that a monument at least as large, expensive, and as central in Tel Aviv as the German holocaust memorial is in Berlin, be built by the Israelis to warn their own people about what their forebears had done re: the Canaanite holocaust. This holocaust is clearly documented in the bible. However no film has ever been made about it. Not even a single television documentary has been made about it.

I guess Stephen Spielberg isn't interested in history as such, but merely in one particular episode of man's inhumanity to man. Does he wish to contribute to the lies and myths of the world, the very sort that led to the Nazi's behavior? Anything less would be sheer hypocrisy on the part of the Jews. Should they not be compelled to do so, then we must be left asking questions about who is in control of the media, of history, of the very reflexive sets of definitions and systems of relations we live in.

Here are some details about the Canaanite Holocaust perpetrated by the Israelites. The world's most revered book, the Old Testament of the bible, and the Jewish Talmud or Torah, glorifies this holocaust. I do not know of any religious Jew who has renounced this holocaust. The story of it forms a proud part of the Jewish traditions. This is the equivalent of proudly glorifying 'Mein Kampf'.

Numbers 31 refers to a 'holy' war against the Midianites. Moses tells his men to kill all the men, boys, and non-virgin females. The virgins, over 32,000 of them, are enslaved. If we assume that this would represent the number of girls under 14 years of age, then that would mean that at least 100,000 men, women, and boys were slaughtered. These people were living on lands which the Israelites wanted to steal. Obviously they wanted to rape young girls and steal whatever they could get their hands on. Numbers documents how they plundered all the booty, and destroyed all the cities. The 'justification' given for this holocaust? Some Midianite women had had sex with some Israeli men who they had invited to worship Baal of Peor, one of the other gods that the Jew's god was jealous of. Moses declared a holy war to punish them for this terrible thing. Seems pretty reasonable, don't you think? Very wise and spiritual-leaderish guy that Moses. He is one of our media heroes, man of god, 'paragon of 'morality', epitome of leadership. You don't often hear him being referred to as a genocidal, insane, nationalistic, serial rapist; probably not in any Hollywood film anyway. Think Spielberg is interested in the rights to this story?

Deuteronomy 3 documents how King Sihon of Hesbon's Kingdom was attacked by the Israelites, who killed every man, woman, and child, leaving absolutely no survivors. This was pure genocide. Everything was destroyed and everyone put to death. The same happened to King Og of Bashan. Moses referred to these genocides as 'great and wonderful', and commanded his army to continue across Jordan into Lebanon, continuing the genocide and absolute destruction. Would he have stopped at 6 million? How many victims were there? Have any Israeli research teams attempted to document this slaughter? Any American ones perhaps?

Deuteronomy 6 details how 'the lords own people'; remind you of anyone? hint: the people chosen by historical destiny a few thousand years later?: are told by Moses to put all of the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, to death, 'do not show them any mercy...from all the peoples on earth, god chose you to be his own special people...you will destroy everyone in the land...this the lord has promised me...because they are wicked'. I wonder what made them wicked? Because they lived on land the Israelites wanted for themselves? Because the Jews god was jealous of the competition? Maybe they collected firewood on Saturdays? Did

they control world finance and politics, and prevent a righteous people from taking their just place in the international order?

In Deuteronomy 8, Moses commands his people to stone to death anyone who tries to change their beliefs, and kill everyone in any town or village that worships other gods. Moses could have been a bit more tolerant, don't you think. Is he your idea of a wise and righteous statesman?

In Deuteronomy 21 Moses commands his people to give a city the chance to surrender. If they do then all the inhabitants are to be made slaves and forced to do the Jews labor for them. If they don't, then you are to kill every man, and may take everything, including every woman. In other words rape and enslave any girl that takes your fancy.

Deuteronomy 16 '...but when you capture cities in the land that the lord is going to give you, kill everyone. Completely destroy all the people: the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebasites, as the lord ordered you to...' Deuteronomy 10 '...you can force her to have sex with you...if you rape her, and don't want to keep her, to marry her, then you must set her free...you may not sell or enslave her...' . Let us think about this. This would mean they would rape a woman, then set her free, upon which she would be 'free' to be raped by anyone else, in an unending process until no-one wanted to rape her, or someone wanted to marry her. Given the pathological focus on virginity in such a culture at such a time, marriage offers would probably be pretty thin on the ground for such unfortunate girls. This is the biblical hero we hear so little about. Did Cecil B. DeMille miss these parts when he read his bible? I don't recall it in his grand epic The Ten Commandments.

In Deuteronomy 28, Moses threatens his people with every imaginable known and not yet known suffering and calamity if they do not obey him. The typical 'fates worse than death'. Fear is the basis of his leadership, that and 'legitimizing' the rape of very young girls, theft, murder, and genocide. His god is an angry god. Moses defines obeying Moses as good, and not obeying Moses as evil. When we consider what it is that he was commanding his people to do, we must be left speechless. In the song of Moses, in Deuteronomy 32, we are told that god assigned each nation a god, but chose Israel and the Jews for himself. God states that his Jews will disobey him and will be punished. He pronounces that a 'nation of fools' will punish them for him, but that they will be merely being used as god's tool, and they will be destroyed after serving his ends. Does that sound like a part of history you know of? Of course they have made heaps of films about that story! Really popular theme that, Jews as victims.

How is that for covering your bases? Moses can attribute any failure of his own as being the will of god, and hence he himself could not be held responsible. And given that this was written over 300 years after the events supposedly took place, it 'reconciles' the enslavement of the great Jewish people, God's people, with the fact that they are God's chosen people, and thus superior to their enslaving masters. God will allow the inferior to dominate them for a time to teach them a few lessons. So not only can't you argue that your enemies' Gods must be stronger because your enemy triumphed over you, you can argue that you are still the greatest, even if you are in bondage, for now. It is part of the way god loves his chosen people, the superior and righteous people of this planet. Pretty darn clever don't you think? Got to hand it to those bible writer guys! The masters of spin.

In Deuteronomy 33, Moses goes on to tell his people that their '... enemies will come begging for mercy, and you will trample them down...'. Now we come to Joshua 6, which tells of the famous battle of Jericho, where that famous song informs us, 'the walls came tumbling down'. All living creatures apart from a prostitute who had helped Joshua's spies, and her family, were slaughtered. Joshua 8 tells how the same happened in Ai. The total population of Ai, about 12000, were slaughtered in one day. The Israelites had to settle for enslavement when it came to Gideon, as the Jews had been tricked into signing treaties with them.

Joshua 11 details how God commanded Moses, and Moses commanded Joshua, who commanded the Jews, to put everyone to death (genocide) and burn every city of the following peoples to the ground. The Amorites, Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Horem of Gezer, Hebron, Eglon, Debir, all towns and peoples from Kadesh Barnea in the south, to Gaza on the coast,...God ordered them to cripple horses..., Hazer, Madon, Shimron, Achshaph, Jordan, Galilee, Dor, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Mizpah...put every person to death...no-one was left alive...,

Goshen, Mt Halak to Edom, Baalgad, Lebanon, Judah, Israel, Anakim, etc, etc Amorites, Heshbon, Gilead, Aroer, Beth

Jeshimoth, Bashan of the Rehpaim, Asthtaroth, Edrei, Salecah, Bashan, Canaanites,

Hivites, Jerusalem, Jarmuth, Lachisch, Eglon, Gezer, Debir, Geder, Hormah, Arad,

Tappayah, Hepher, Aphek, Lasharon, Madon, Hazor, Shimron, Medon, Aschshaph, Taanach, Megiddo, Kedesh, Jokneam, Dor, Goiim, Tirzah- including 31 Kingdoms and Kings in all.

In later chapters of Jewish history as presented in the Old Testament, the Jews under David and Saul commit similar acts of genocide.

The priests are cunning in the Old Testament. All victories are provided by god, and all defeats are punishments for failing to obey god, which effectively meant not obeying the priests themselves. The priests write in advance that the Jews will be punished for not obeying well enough, and so that when the defeats do come, which is inevitable, they still work in favor of the priests. The people are made to believe that the defeats are the predicted punishments, that god is still powerful, that the priests still are the most powerful as they represent the most powerful god. The population can get back into God's good-books by making lots of cake and giving it to the priests to eat. The priests can't lose. They can't fail to win. Lots of cake no matter how badly their god does for his people, and they can eat it too. Masters of spin, those priests!

What for other peoples would demonstrate that their gods were illusions, or at least less powerful than the competition's gods, is a-priori defined for the people as proof that their god exists, and proof that, rather than go over to the competition, they should in fact obey their current god even more fervently. As the representatives of god, it is the priests who get all the cake, all the power, all the privileges. Nice work if you can get it. Got to hand it to those priests. Clever boys. And to avoid anyone catching on, the whole set-up is veiled in 'sacredness'. No-one dare question let alone interrogate them about what is going on. Anyone clever enough to work out the scam would either join them, or be burnt alive at the stake for challenging them.

However Kenneth Humphreys notes that 'The opening chapter of 'The book of Judges' presents a markedly different account of the Israelite occupation from that found in the book of Joshua ... The account in Judges reveals that ... the Israelites settled alongside the indigenous inhabitants'. So maybe the Canaanite holocaust never happened. It would be nice to think so. Makes you wonder then why the Jews would so proudly pretend they had committed acts that would inspire later leaders to commit the very same acts upon them? What hypocrisy. To elevate one leader to moral cult status while demonizing another for the same behaviors. You have to appreciate the irony of the situation. Jews pretending they had committed mass genocide as perpetrators of holocaust, and Nazi's pretending they hadn't done so.

'Books can't change the world. But, when the world begins to change, it looks for such books'

Historian Schlomo Sand writes that the 'history' of Israel is a fake. There are no 'Jewish' people as such. Historians are paid to construct a sense of national identity. The Jews of Israel in fact share the same genes as the Palestinians and Syrians they Israelis define as 'Arabs'. The Israeli studies which initially claimed to validate the Jews notion of a unique genetic profile have since been demonstrated to have been fundamentally flawed. These studies had sought to construct Jews around the world as a genetically unique and related group. This is the equivalent of constructing a 'race'. So idea of Jews is in fact a Zionist construction. It is in fact not valid to talk of a 'Jewish' people at all. Sand notes that Jews do not even share the same lifestyle, or even language, across the world. The only thing they have in common is their religion.

In any case 25% of the Israeli population are already non-Jewish. In 1948 Israel robbed the Palestinians robbed of their land. The U.N recognizes this occupation as 'unlawful', however it has never guaranteed the Palestinians a 'right of return'.

Sand noted that, 'Books can't change the world. But, when the world begins to change, it looks for such books'. I shall have to take such consolation as this where I can find it.

Moses and Hitler as twins

According to the bible, Moses instructed his people to go into the 'Promised Land' and kill every living thing, every man, woman, child, and animal. Moses claimed this was the will of god. Hitler told his Nazis to kill every Jew in Europe. Hitler claimed that this was a 'historical imperative'. Hitler defined the Aryan race as having the historical destiny to be the master 'race'. All other races or peoples were defined by history as untermenschen, as inferior. The Aryan people's historical destiny was to sub-ordinate the non-Aryans.

The Jews defined themselves as the chosen people, God's chosen people. Only the Jews were the children of god, and had the destiny of a glorious future. The Jews had the right to enslave, murder, rape, and steal the land and wealth of all and any non-Jews. The Jewish religion defined all non-Jews and non-Jewish culture as inferior. Jews were not to marry outside of their religion. At one point in Israel's history, persons who could not prove their Jewish ancestry back to 10 generations were forcibly expelled from Israel.

Aryans were not to marry non-Aryans. Aryans had the right to enslave and murder Jews, and appropriate their wealth and possessions for themselves, for the Nazi party.

God and history, according to Hitler and Moses, had respectively chosen the Aryans and the Jews for a glorious historical destiny. Both Moses and Hitler were disappointed by their follower's inability or unwillingness to carry out their historical purpose, and realize the plans they had for them, these destinies. The Torah and 'Mein Kampf' are essentially equivalent documents. It is incredibly revealing that the Torah is held in great esteem and respect, while Mein Kampf is demonized, and possession of it a criminal offense in some nations. Nazism is illegal, while Zionism is held up as a cultural icon.

Genocide since the Old Testament

We must note that the Jews don't have a monopoly on genocide, just a franchise.

Germans committed acts of genocide during the holocaust and earlier in Namibia. The Romans committed genocide in Carthage, North Africa, against Hannibal. The Russians committed acts of genocide in the former U.S.S.R. The Turks committed genocide against the Armenians. Pol Pot murdered around a quarter of the Cambodian population. Idi Amin did the same in Africa as Mao Tze Tung did in China. Genghis Khan committed genocide as a means of subjugating most of Europe. The Mongol population never exceeded one million, however every individual city he attacked knew that when Genghis Khan threatened it with 'surrender or be totally annihilated', he meant it. He murdered entire cities to set the example to all other cities. Thus most cities surrendered to his armies without a fight.

After the invasion and destruction of the Yugoslav army by the Axis Powers in 1941, the Independent State of Croatia was founded, and run by the Croatian fascist group the Ustase. Mile Budak, the Minister for Education & Culture stated in 1941 that: 'The basis for the Ustashe movement is religion. For minorities such as the Serbs, Jews, and Gypsies, we have three million bullets. We will kill a part of the Serbs. Others we will deport, and the rest we will force to accept the Roman Catholic Religion. Thus the new Croatia will be rid of all Serbs in its midst in order to be 100% Catholic within 10 years'. Between 1941-1945 Ustasa terrorists killed 500,000 Serbs, expelled 250,000 and forced 250,000 to convert to Catholicism. They murdered thousands of Jews and Gypsies.

According to an official U.S report, 'The Armenian Genocide was conceived and carried out by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923, resulting in the deportation of nearly 2,000,000 Armenians, of whom 1,500,000 men, women, and children were killed,

500,000 survivors were expelled from their homes ... succeeded in the elimination of the over 2,500-year presence of Armenians in their historic homeland.' 'The post-World War I Ottoman Government indicted the top leaders involved'... 'Officials of the Young Turk Regime were tried and convicted, as charged, for organizing and executing massacres against the Armenian people'. The chief organizers 'Minister of War Enver, Minister of the Interior Talaat, and Minister of the Navy Jemal...were all condemned to death for their crimes, however, the verdicts of the courts were not enforced.'

During the first 50 years after Muslim Turks conquered Bulgaria in 1396, the Ottoman Empire starved or killed half the Bulgarian population, forcing them to convert to Islam. During the April uprising of 1878 the Turks killed 30,000 rebels. Speaking of Bulgaria, it is interesting to note that body-language is not universal. In Bulgaria shaking your head means you agree, while nodding means you disagree.

In 1932-1933 the Soviet authority's theft of grain left 40 million people to starve, resulting in circa 10 million deaths in Ukraine. Similar actions and consequences were suffered in Maoist China.

A case was filed in the Federal Court of Australia on 20 September 2006 for alleged crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity during 1971 by the Pakistani Armed Forces and its collaborators. Pakistan and its primary ally the U.S have denied Genocide allegations. The Guinness Book of Records lists the Bengali atrocities as one of the top 5 genocides in the 20th century, estimating a death tally of up to 3 million.

Tutsis murdered up to 150,000 Hutus in Burundi in 1972. Up to 1000 victims a day were hacked to death with machetes. In Rwanda, in 100 days in 1994, 937,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed by Hutus. The rate at which people were killed far exceeded any other genocide in history. Again machetes were the most common implement of death.

The Communist Party of Kampuchea led by Pol Pot murdered up to 1.7 million Cambodians between 1975-1979. Many were worked to death.

During the Indonesian occupation of East Timor from 1975 to 1999 around 18,600 East Timorese were murdered, and another 84,200 died from hunger and illness directly related to the Indonesian occupation. A

UN report stated that the Indonesian military used starvation as a weapon to exterminate the East Timorese, along with Napalm and chemical weapons, obtained from the United States, which poisoned the food and water supply.

The United States government's Sudan Peace Act of October 21, 2002 accused Sudan of genocide in an ongoing civil war which has cost more than 2,000,000 lives and has displaced more than 4,000,000 people since 1983.

Fifteen countries now officially define the mass killings of Armenians during the last years of the Ottoman Empire as genocide. Other genocides allegedly committed by the Ottoman Empire include the Pontian Greek Genocide and the Assyrian Genocide. The direct or indirect death toll of Greeks in Anatolia ranges from 300,000 to 360,000 men, women and children. An estimated 275,000 'Assyro-Chaldeans' died between 1914 and 1918.

Poker machines, unearned money, and taking advantage of the most vulnerable

Tattersalls are one of two corporations allowed to operate poker machines in the Australian State of Victoria. Tattersalls have enjoyed a long and mutually rewarding relationship with the government. Poker machines bring in revenue for the State Government. This revenue has been the argument behind legal gambling for centuries. A few charities benefit also. This nominal public good is milked for all the public relations good it can do. The real benefactors of Tattersalls are those conceived to families favored by Tattersall in his will. These lucky few share in a windfall of over \$112 Million a year. The Directors of the company pay themselves multi-million dollar fees for doing very little. It is not very hard to run an established duopoly. It is basically a right to print money.

It is not fair that people get money for nothing, whilst the majority of people have to earn it. It gets worse, though. Tattersalls introduced a 'Tatts advantage card', to 'spy' on their customers. Tattersalls Directors hire market research firms to collect and analyze data generated by the cards. This data indicated that 57% of all poker machine revenues came from 15% of poker machine gamblers. These 15% could be considered to be gambling addicts, by any reasonable estimation. The Directors of Tattersalls flatly denied that they were effectively taking advantage of the addiction or illness of its customers. This sort of 'unconscionable conduct' is actually against the law. It is criminal to, say, get someone to sign a contract whilst they are drunk.

When a television presenter challenged them about this, the Directors denied knowledge of the marketing statistics that they themselves had hired marketing companies to produce. This market research was the reason for the introduction of the new cards. New licensing laws had limited the numbers of poker machines that could be installed in any one club. The directors wanted to ensure that this limited number of 'gaming' machines would be placed in the areas where they could generate the most profits. This effectively meant poor working class suburbs where many problem gamblers lived. In other words, the Tattersalls Directors had cynically and with cold calculation, decided to take advantage of those gamblers least able to afford gambling, and least able to control their gambling.

A gambling addicts lobby group recommended that problem gambling could be controlled by allowing users to set their own 'daily limit' before they began gambling. The reason for this is that gambling addicts experience the poker machines as a sort of trance inducing ritual. The mechanical movements and concentration of the use combine with the flash and whirr of the machines to produce a sort of hypnotic state. Once they are 'in the zone', those with a gambling problem forget time and space, and lose consciousness of how much money they are putting into the machines.

The Directors of Tattersalls cynically rejected the suggestion. It must be obvious to anyone that they are deliberately preying on those least able to protect themselves. Countless families are suffering because of their cold hearted and greedy behavior. This is a form of violence.

Any society that does not find it shameful to exploit someone's weaknesses, addictions, or illness, merely to enrich a few people who do not need the money anyway, and who do nothing to earn it, must be a very cynical one. That the Victorian state government would opportunistically 'cash in' on the problems of the most vulnerable members of their communities must also indicate the moral bankruptcy of the Victorian state government.

It is sad that for many people the only way out of their poverty is through gambling. They have none of the forms of capital, talent, education, training, connections, or money, that might alone them to 'earn' a decent life.

It is sadly ironic that by seeking to get out of their predicament, they fall even lower. Most ironic of all is that any benefit they might get from gambling is paid for by their peers. The poor are, and always will be, worse off due to the poker machines. But the tragedy is that gambling is still their only hope for an improvement in their personal circumstances, and therefore they will be motivated to continue. Hope springs eternal! No-one can live without

hope. Tattersalls and the government are abusing this hope to further their own interests. It is a form of violence. It is a really ugly form of violence perpetrated on those people least able to defend themselves, or resist.

Television gambling

German television broadcaster Pro 7 are taking advantage of vulnerable people. Every morning they present a 'game-break'. It appears that if you solve the riddle, you can call in, and win a few hundred Euro. In fact if you manage to read the fine print that scrolls across the screen once during the program, you will see that it is really a game of chance. The solution to the 'riddles' are obvious. In fact this is just a pretext to trick people into playing a 'game of chance'. In reality they merely chose a caller at random. The company is exploiting some legal loophole, and taking advantage of the most vulnerable of its viewers who will never pick up on the scam. This is a pathetic and appalling way to exploit their audience.

The great men of history as ruthless psychopaths

Alexander the great, like most great men of history, was a ruthless, psychopathic opportunist. He often had 20,000 or more men women and children, in fact total cities, slaughtered, if its occupants resisted his occupation. It is interesting that Alexander had a child-bride named Mathilde. And I mean *child*.

In 911 Rollo, the Norman leader, celebrated the christening of his son by slaughtering hundreds of his captives. The Normans originally raided the wealthy monasteries and towns in, among other places, the North of France. They negotiated with the King of France to be given lands in the North of France in return for stopping their raiding. The

Normans then rebuilt the monasteries they had destroyed. They curried favor with the Catholic Church and the local priests. Remember that the priesthood was mostly made up of later conceived sons and unmarried daughters of the local aristocracy. They funded the construction of famous monasteries including Caen, in Normandy. Almselm, a Student of the famous monk Beck, in Caen, went on to become Pope. St. Michael, the sword carrying saint, was adopted as the patron saint of the Normans. In the Viking religion, a soldier had to die in battle, carrying his sword, in order to gain acceptance into the Viking version of heaven, Valhalla. The Valkyries would pick up the fallen warriors and carry them to Valhalla.

At the time of the Norman Conquest England was the most stable, well administered nation in Europe. This was the source of its wealth. It was the wealth of England that William the Conqueror had set his sights on.

William the Conqueror was the son of a concubine, the illegitimate son of a tanner's daughter. He was an illegitimate bastard. He survived many attempts and plots against him. William claimed that Edward, the king of England, after being shipwrecked in Normandy, had promised William the throne of England, claiming him as his rightful heir. However on the deathbed of King Edward, Harald, the Earl of Essex, was and crowned the last Angle-Saxon King of England. Remember that the British were, at the time, Angle-Saxon. It is hard to imagine how, without the help of an equally ruthless and unscrupulous pope and mercenary army, William could ever have managed to have his 'hostile takeover' defined as legitimate. He was a French speaking Viking. What possible claim could he have had to the throne of an Angle-Saxon kingdom?

The Bayeux tapestry documents William's version of 'his- story', and shows Harald swearing allegiance to William. William gained the Popes approval for his planned 'hostile takeover', his invasion of England, on Harold's death. The Pope offered all of Williams's liege-men, and all the mercenaries he was dependent on for victory, forgiveness for their previous sins, and any sins they might commit during the invasion. This included the trademark 'conquering hero' behaviors of murder, rape, and theft. He offered anyone who died in the conquest of England a place in heaven. Mohamed didn't invent Jihad!

The Normans were heavily armored. They bred especially strong warhorses, the

Destrier. They brought three of these war horses for each knight that sailed across the English Channel. These warhorses were trained to actively participate in battle, by biting and kicking. Of course they suffered a huge rate of attrition in battle. Animals have always paid for our sins.

The king of Norway invaded from the north, claiming the crown for himself, aided by Harald's own brother Tostric, who had earlier been exiled. William landed after Harald had defeated the Norwegians in Battle. Harald's army made the long march back to Hastings to engage the invading Norman army. They arrived exhausted. They were defeated by Williams's army of heavy armour and mercenaries.

William Destroyed and butchered whole villages to serve as a warning to others who might contemplate rebellion or resistance. He lived by the motto 'collaborate or die'. He had 500 castles built, using forced labor. He devoured the native aristocracy. He had over 500 disinherited or killed. He built the tower of London. He began a reign of terror after a massacre of the Norman garrison at York in 1069/70 by locals encouraged by Danes. He was ruthless in his responses to resistance. He followed a policy of 'scorched earth'. During what became known as *'The harrying of The North'* up to 100,000 people were killed. From York to Durham the land was left to waste. His reign was defined by cruelty, barbarity, and murder. He employed a deliberate policy of terror. In spite of this, or because of this, rebellion persisted.

At the time the wealth of York cathedral represented one sixth of the entire nation's wealth. William supported the church. The church supported him. He built churches. It is said that the Normans were bad 'Christians' but good to the church. He conducted an audit of the wealth of his new conquest for taxation purposes. The document became known as the Domesday or doomsday book.

On his deathbed William expressed remorse at the murder of thousands of Saxon English. He had been injured in a hunting accident, and had died of his wounds. His sarcophagus was too small for his obscenely fat body. As they forced him into it, his bowels burst. The stench was so great that they had to rush the service. He was buried in France. His son inherited the throne.

In 60 A.D, after 16 years of Roman invasion, the Romans were in control of Britain. The religious leaders of the locals, the Druids, were hunted down in their sacred grove in Anglesea by a roman legion, and massacred.

Queen Boadecia (Boodica) was originally a collaborator with the Roman occupation. She was queen of the Icini. When her father, the King, died, the Romans ignored their treaties with the Icini. A band of Romans did what they considered normal, and pillaged the Icini camp, raping and pillaging. They raped the 10 and 12 year old daughters of Boodica, and whipped her publicly. This turned Boodica and the Icians into bitter enemies. The Roman capital of Britain had been built on the lands of the Trinivantis. Together with the Icians, the Trinivantis attacked the roman capital. The Roman occupiers were so confident that they had not prepared any defenses. The Icini and Trinivanti ransacked and destroyed the city. The inhabitants sought refuge in their temple. They were burnt alive in it. It is not uncommon for the victims to outdo the perpetrators in horror and brutality. The victims are usually no better than the perpetrators.

The Icini and Trinivanti then moved onto Londinium. The Roman legion was in Anglesea 12 days march away, slaughtering the Druids. The Icini and Trinivanti attacked Londinium.

The pre-Roman British held no fear of death. They believed in reincarnation. If they fought well, they would be assured a better position in their next life.

One of the great technological and organizational strengths of the Roman army was its discipline and tactics. One such tactic was the Roman wedge formation. They formed impenetrable wedges with their shields. They could stab at the enemy through the small gaps between the shields. This tactic proved greatly effective against their numerically superior enemy. The attackers were then cut down by the Roman Cavalry. Tacitus reports that in the final battle against the native Britons Roman casualties numbered only 400 , while 80,000 native Britons, men, women, and children, lost their lives. Roman reprisals then took place against the locals.

The Romans went on to rule Britain for 400 years. Roman 'civilization' was built on slavery, corruption, and the occupation and exploitation of foreign lands.

Ken Humphreys notes how Charlemagne, the Christian hero, spent most of his time butchering recalcitrant Saxons. On coming to the throne in 768, Charlemagne launched a vicious campaign of evangelism against the

Saxons by cutting down their sacred tree the World Tree or Yggdrasil, located in the north German forest near present day Marburg.

The Saxons resisted 'conversion' and in 772, Charles 'the great' issued a proclamation that he would kill every Saxon who refused to accept Jesus Christ. He kept a special detachment of Christian priest-executioners who, in a single day at Verden in 782, beheaded 4500 Saxons for returning to their old gods, and continuing such dastardly Pagan practices such the cremation of their dead.

Humphreys also notes how the ever-pious 'Holy' Roman Emperor Justinian saved his throne in the face of the Nika riots in 532 by massacring 30-50,000 of the rioters. 46,000 dead and over 250,000 wounded people paid the price for Winston Churchill's narcissism and compulsion to go down in history as 'a great man'. There is a general consensus that none of the campaigns initiated and pushed through by Churchill served any positive military ends. They were merely expressions of Churchill's need for action, for a chance to become 'significant'.

Gallipoli was a case in question. The Dardanelles campaign was Churchill's plan from the start. Everyone else was against it, including all of his military advisors. The Lord of the Admiralty actually quit in horror at Churchill's plans. The plans were doomed to failure at every level from their very inception. In the words of his military advisors, it was a bad idea poorly instigated. Churchill, apparently, suffered from psychlothymia, a condition bordering on bi-polar disorder, or what is commonly referred to as manic depression. He was an outrageous alcoholic, drinking continuously during his waking hours. He had what could be called an 'exaggerated self-belief'. Some would claim he was seeking the love of his father, which he never received as a boy.

His quest for adulation and glory can be seen as a narcissistic desperation to gain the approval and acceptance of his father. He had constantly, and incorrectly, predicted all sorts of doom scenarios. When Hitler by chance fulfilled one particular prediction of Churchill's it was pure luck. His prediction was dismissed as Churchill merely crying wolf once more. Most people with only a casual acquaintance with history will not be aware of this fact. To them it will merely seem that Churchill had some great insight that allowed him to predict Hitler's true motives. It was merely coincidence that one of his many 'doom' predictions' came true.

This is the same selective bias that makes psychics appear, well, psychic. We don't hear about all their misses. We are only get to hear about their hits.

It's worth noting that it was Churchill who 'produced' Iraq, around 80 years ago, by combining three Turkish provinces. These provinces had no natural basis for union. This was either done deliberately to keep Iraq from ever becoming powerful, or merely blunderingly, without consideration for the consequences. Of course if you have watched any news broadcast over the last decade you'll be aware of what these consequences are.

As with John F Kennedy and Boris Yeltsin, Churchill was in fact much too ill to be campaigning for the most powerful and responsible position in his nation. JFK suffered from Addison's disease, which accounted for his bronzed good looks. He was not expected to live long enough to take up the position of president if he won. He took all sorts of 'medications' including sex hormones (cortisone), which accounted for his huge sexual appetite.

Boris Yeltsin was suffering from continuous heart attacks and alcoholism. Churchill was suffering from the equivalent of manic depression, and taking large amounts of 'speed', that is, amphetamines, to counter his depressions. In his speed accelerated manic phases, he forced through 'manic' plans that would place his name in history as a great leader, but which had no chance of success, and which would cost hundreds of thousands of other people their lives.

911

Please note that this section was written while I was still completely ignorant of what really happened on 911. At this point I was merely suspicious, and considered that the 'terrorists' had simply been allowed to succeed. Now I realise that there were no Islamic terrorists involved. Only C.I.A and Mossad. Please read my book '911 (5 minutes to midnight?) for details.

Bush Junior publicly claimed to have seen the first plane hit the World Trade Center on television. But no television reports had shown the first plane hitting the WTC until the day after 'Nine-Eleven'. Only the second plane was shown that day. Bush can actually be seen on video footage made for television sitting in front a classroom of small children, looking ineffectual and uncomfortable, being told about the second plane hitting the

Bush Junior's first oil company was financed by the Bin Laden family. In the 70's Bush Junior started up the 'Arbusto' oil and gas company, with Saudi money. Later again, he got 25 million dollars in Saudi money. In 1988 the Bin Laden family made illegal campaign fund contributions through lawyers in Washington. The Saudi Ambassador had 24/7 access to the oval office under Bush Senior.

The Saudis are the largest buyers of U.S armaments, the largest single investors in the U.S stock market, and the largest single oil supplier to the U.S. On the day of 911, the Saudis were in a meeting with the Carlyle group. Bush Senior met with the Bin Laden family the day after 911. 48 hours later the Bin Laden family were allowed to fly out of the U.S. These were the only civilian flights allowed in U.S air space. There was a total flight ban in force.

The contracts for the rebuilding of buildings bombed by Osama Bin Laden were given to the Bin Laden family. The Bin Laden family business profited from their Osama's acts of terrorism. The Bin Laden's are in fact the second richest family in Saudi Arabia, after the Royal Family. The Bin Laden's own Huston airport. Osama had been chosen to lead a Muslim Army to liberate Afghanistan from the Russians.

Of course Al Quaeda was set up, trained, financed, and supplied with intelligence and logistics by the U.S. This occurred both to bankrupt the U.S.S.R and to gain concessions for the building of a gas pipeline to carry Central Asian gas to the Caspian Sea.

In the 80's Osama Bin Laden was an ally of the U.S. However he saw the placement of U.S troops in Saudi Arabia as a 'sacrilege'. The infidels were in the holy land! The Saudis kept paying Osama long after the Russians had withdrawn from Afghanistan, and after Osama had announced that his new enemy was the U.S. In public the Bin Laden's had officially disowned Osama, but in private they continued to support him. The Saudis had in fact made an agreement with Osama that they would continue to support him, if he did not target their regime.

15 of the 19 hijackers involved in the 911 attacks were Saudis. The C.I.A knew that members of Al Quaeda were living in the U.S, learning to fly commercial jumbo jets, but with no interest in learning how to land them. Knowing this, they had even renewed their visas. The group had been under surveillance by the Saudis for a long time. Saudi Arabia is a tyrannical state where democracy and human rights are ignored. The Bush administrations have such close and rewarding financial relations with the Saudis that they continue to turn a blind eye to the evils of the Saudi feudal state.

Che Guevara is fine if you are his '*mate*'

Guevara joined Fidel Castro's revolutionary 26th of July Movement in Mexico in 1956. During the guerrilla campaign, Guevara was feared for his ruthlessness, and was responsible for the execution of a number of men accused of being informers, deserters or spies. In 1959, after Fidel Castro seized power from Dictator General Batista in Cuba, Guevara, as 'supreme prosecutor', oversaw the 'kangaroo' trials during which between 156 and 550 people, many former Batista regime officials and members of the secret police, were executed on Guevara's extra-judicial orders.

Jos Vilasuso, an attorney who worked under Guevara wrote that: 'the facts were judged without any consideration to general judicial principles'.

Guevara served in Castro's government while writing a number of articles and books on guerrilla warfare, Guevara left Cuba in 1965 with the intention of fomenting revolutions first in Congo-Kinshasa, and then in Bolivia, where he was captured by a joint Bolivian Army - CIA - U.S. Army Special Forces operation, and summarily executed by the Bolivian Army on October 9, 1967.

A few weeks after the Cuban Missile Crisis was resolved in 1962 by the Russian removal of Nuclear Missiles positioned in Cuba Guevara told a reporter for The British newspaper 'Daily Worker' that, had the missiles been under Cuban control, they would have been fired at major U.S cities. Note the hypocrisy of the U.S, which at the time maintained its own nuclear missiles in Turkey, right on the border with Soviet territories.

The victim is no better than the perpetrator

Pagans persecuted their contemporary Christians. Christians went on to persecute pagans. Jews persecuted Christians. Christians persecuted Jews. Bolsheviks persecuted Christians and Jews. Jews today persecute Muslims. Hindus persecute Muslims.

Muslims persecute Hindus. All in the name of a loving god. All in the name of religion. Everyone seeks to be defined as the victim. However no-one is innocent. The only truly holy faith I know of are the authentic Jains. They follow the Jain faith, as it was intended, as a philosophy, without any of the trappings of religion.

Consider the typical Mel Gibson movie. Our hero is a peaceable man who avoids all violence. However his family becomes the victim of someone else's violence. From that moment on he can savagely kill as many people as he wants, destroy as much property as he chooses, as he has been ennobled by the definition 'victim'. He can express all his instincts to aggressive destruction without any inhibition. He is merely seeking 'justice' and so all the destruction, death, and havoc he wreaks is 'justified'. He has 'just cause'.

His violence is legitimate. In reality such scenarios merely give the audience an excuse to enjoy violent destruction. They identify with the 'hero'. You will find that the average thug always seeks some nominal 'provocation' in order to be able to nominally 'justify' their violence. It is always preferable to employ violence as a victim, rather than a perpetrator. Once you have defined yourself as victim, you have 'carte Blanche' for wholesale destruction.

Will Jews allow gypsies and non-Jews Israeli citizenship? Do non-Jews working in Israel have the right to apply for and occupy government offices? The Jews will remind us that Jews were denied such rights in Nazi Germany. Are the Jews hypocrites once more? Is it Anti-Semitic to say anything bad about Jews, even when such criticisms are fully justified and compelling?

Kissinger, Nixon, fascism, and the Nobel Peace Prize

Kissinger is another example of the irony of the Nobel Peace prize awards. He and his family escaped Nazi persecution and ended up in America, where he became secretary of state to Nixon. He apparently hated Nixon, but like the Nazis, was merely interested in power, and was willing to serve under any administration, so long as it was in a position of power. He spied for Nixon when he was working for Nixon's opponents.

He actively promoted the Vietnam War as a means to maintaining the Nixon administration's popularity. He sabotaged peace negotiations by lying to the South Vietnamese leaders, and compelling them to refrain from attending peace talks with the North Vietnamese. In fact Kissinger had intelligence reports which clearly stated that over 80% of the South Vietnamese were against the war, and in fact supported the Viet Cong, the North Vietnamese 'Communist' government.

Kissinger was responsible, as secretary of state to Nixon, for the murder of millions of Vietnamese civilians. Civilians were deliberately targeted by Kissinger, in an attempt to drive the civilian population in North Vietnam South, to give the impression to the U.S public that the Vietnamese were actually opposed to the 'communist' government of the

North, and were 'voting with their feet'. However they were not running away from the Viet Cong, they were running away from the American terrorist's bombs. This was typically cynical behavior. The war was seen as essential to keeping Nixon in power, and therefore to Kissinger's own lust for gaining and maintaining his own personal political power.

Kissinger cynically used war for his own ends, in the same way that Adolf Hitler and the

Nazi party did. Kissinger's comments about fascism and his own experience of it in Germany as a victim are of course highly ironic in this context. They demonstrate once more that victims are not necessarily any better than their victimizers. A 'persecuted' Jew escaped one fascist regime, one group of people motivated by lust for power, who would cynically and ruthlessly exploit human suffering to their own ends, merely to behave in the same way. It is ironic that had he not escaped the Nazi pogroms, millions of people may not have suffered horrible deaths, and a whole country may have been saved from destruction.

Kissinger promoted the war by promising to help the south, to commit to victory, to actually promise victory. In fact he abandoned the South Vietnamese as soon as it was politically expedient to do so. The war had been a means to an end for Kissinger. As soon as it no longer served his own personal interests, he signed a peace treaty, and won the Nobel Peace Prize.

The South had been willing years before the end of the war to sign an armistice, and the general population had been in favor of the 'communist' government, and against the war. Kissinger had merely promoted the war to satisfy his own lust for power. He acted unscrupulously and ruthlessly, even genocidally, merely to serve the domestic political ends of the Nixon Administration. This administration was his own personal vehicle for power. He was as much an opportunist as any of the worst Nazis were.

Of course you will not read this in his memoirs. I myself became informed about this through a television documentary which provided irrefutable documentary evidence and interviews.

It is noteworthy that Colin Powell, a powerful member of the current Bush administration, was apparently very actively involved in the official government attempt at 'covering-up' after the notoriously infamous Mei Lei massacre during the Vietnam war in which U.S troops gunned down 156 men, women and children. Apparently Powell was author of a report which attempted to deny that any massacre ever took place. I'm having trouble finding more information on this. I first heard about it in a reputable television documentary, and since then have read references to his involvement in internet 'blogs'.

Happily some people do learn from history. Noam Chomsky's family survived the Holocaust, and he has fought long and hard for justice for Palestinians.

Third strike rule means violent offenders being given early release

The 3rd strike rule means that many violent offenders with only one or two strikes are being shifted out of prison as soon as possible to make room for the '3 strikers' who have never committed violent crimes. However due to the sentencing laws, they are given automatic 20 year, so-called 'life' sentences.

TROONATNOOR ON CONSCIOUSNESS

Intelligences-Awarenesses

We recognize that people have different 'constellations of awarenesses', and within these constellations, different levels of different intelligences. Musical intelligence, for example, allows for awareness of tone, pitch, interval, melody, and rhythm, enabling the reproduction of external audio input, and the production of 'original' music. Visual artists have an intelligence enabling them to reproduce external visual input and generate their own images. Particular individuals possess particular constellations of intelligences or awarenesses. These awarenesses are the product of inherited genetic-and-cultural protocols.

Never forget that we inherit our 'nurture' as much as our 'nature', and that that 'nurture' is a product of the 'nature' of those who 'nurture' us. The only real value in making any distinction between nature and nurture is whether we can compensate for poor natural inheritances by 'nurturing' people more generously. In terms of your parents, you inherit their genes, and they are the prime sources of any 'nurturing' you receive, so it is hard to distinguish one from the other.

Am I pathologically careful with money because of the genes I inherited, or because of the cultural influence of my parents during my most vulnerable formative years? Of course all outcomes are the product of the interactions of determinisms. We need to ensure each individual gets the optimal nature and nurture required to live lives justifiable in themselves.

Genetic protocols interact with cultural protocols, and this interaction can produce a change in the cultural protocols. Of course the cultural protocols, at this stage of human evolution, are also beginning to interact with the genetic protocols, and produce a change in them. We are referring to genetic engineering. The general process of interactions is sometimes called innovation. This is what creative people do.

Understanding that determinisms interact, so that a socio-historically dominant set of determinants emerge, is intrinsic to comprehending the nature of determinism.

Determinism does not rule out or guarantee social progress. Whether society progresses is determined by the relative strength of holistic reason and enlightenment as determinants.

Some people manage to have a positive impact on their socio- cultural-historical environment. Most people merely passively accommodate the socio-cultural-historic stage they have inherited, and re-produce it.

Different intelligences allow for different awarenesses. Different levels of these awarenesses determine the range and degree of awareness. Musical awareness, for example, can be seen as a spectrum ranging from virtual zero musical ability, up to musical genius such as that inherited, by nature and nurture, by Mozart.

A holistically enlightened intelligence allows for perceptions of 'holistic' interrelationships. Persons not in possession of such an intelligence are not aware of the dilemmas, interdependencies, and relationships, that persons with a holistic intelligence are aware of. This includes the ability to comprehend the nature of interactive determinism.

The algorithm or constellation of inheritances determines the sensitivity of a particular entity to particular 'experiences'. A dog has particular intelligences which enable it to smell and hear what a human can't, but which exclude it from being able to see what a human can.

Environmental influences determine whether, and in what way, intelligences will be realized or manifest, nurtured or stunted. Growing up in a musical household will promote the realization or manifestation of musical talents, and give them the opportunity to bloom. Had Mozart grown up in a Siberian Gulag, he probably never would have had the chance to develop or exercise his musical potential. In this way, due to environmental inter-activities, particular awarenesses may become manifest while others remain latent.

It is a goal of education and training in interrogation and critical reasoning to allow for the manifestation of holistic awarenesses, holistic sensitivities, and holistic reasoning skills.

Most human organisms construct from their experience the belief that they have 'free will'. They do not 'comprehend' that their 'choices' are in fact determined, that their 'intentions' are propergerents of the interactions of

algorithmic processes. They have been taught to see the world other than for what it is. The true nature of reality has been distorted through socialization and education. One of the greatest challenges for the philosopher is to 'unlearn' such dogma and *mis*-information. The holistically enlightened philosopher must allow them to escape the teleological loops they have inherited.

How most people define the question of free will is interactively determined by the level of composition they adopt. All 'will' is determined. This is to say that we don't choose what we 'want'. Most discussions of 'free will' focus on the higher levels of composition, focusing on whether or not we are free to pursue those things we 'want' to. They fail to go deeper. They fail to recognize that we inherit our tastes, preferences, desires, and wants, either genetically or socio-culturally. What they are really only talking about is the ability to pursue these inherited wants and desires. This is what they limit their talk about 'freedom' to. They are merely talking about the freedom to satisfy desires that have been determined for them.

As a slight digression, consider the interesting paradox of identical twins who both share the identical need to be individuals, and hence behave differently to each other, motivated by the exact same inherited genetic make-up.

I am?

In Language formulations of the nature, I am aware, I see, I hear, I think, there is an I which is aware, seeing, hearing, and thinking. The I is the propergent of its cultural and genetic inheritance, other more physical forms of 'environment', and cumulative experiences. Its genetic and cultural inheritances determine what senses are available to it, and how their potential inputs will be processed or interpreted. It inherits innate tendencies, 'instincts', to respond to particular types of stimuli in particular ways. It inherits an instinctive tendency to seek out patterns, correlations, and relationships, and construct meanings from these experiences by relating them to each other. These meanings accumulate over generations into a culture.

Some individuals have the innate tendency of seeking to construct their own meanings, and to test the validity of the meanings they have, through culture, inherited. This tendency leads them to question, and to learn how to question, to learn the methods of interrogation. These methods become ever more sophisticated as they evolve. These individuals are our 'philosophers' and 'scientists'.

I am aware. I am the potential for awareness. Plug me into an experience engine and I will experience what it has to offer. Plug me into a plant experience engine and I will experience being a plant. Plug me into a human experience engine and I will experience being a human. Plug me into a robot? What would a robot require in order to qualify as an experience engine? Plug me directly into virtual reality? What hardware and software would be necessary to qualify it as an experience engine? The closer we come to a purely software based experience engine, the closer we will be to that mystical state we humans define as spiritual.

A purely software based experienced engine would be the ultimate Operating Thetan, for you Scientologists out there, or demi-god-like experience. We could become both the programmer of the experience, and the experience engine itself. We could exist as pure energy. Or maybe we do already. According to many advanced physicists, we are pure energy, and reality is virtual. It is a reflexive set of 'agreements' we call the laws of physics.

Until we have a definition of what awareness is, we won't know whether such things are possible. At the moment we could imagine becoming cyborgs, and integrating our nervous systems with machines we design and build ourselves. Alternatively we could become brains in vats, and connect our nerve endings with virtual reality machines which would provide all the synthetic inputs, experiences, and stimulation that we desire. We could directly interface with external hardware and software to produce all the experiences we desired, free of the Pareto-efficient, zero-sum world. Thus we would have an experience engine defined by pure synergy and symbiosis.

Is this our destiny? To free our awareness units from the bodies which limit them? To free ourselves from the cycle of growth and decay? Are we to evolve into beings independent of the bodies we have inherited? Does the evolutionary process lead us in this direction? Or are we nothing more than our bodies? Do our bodies actually produce awareness? If so we might still escape the cycles by integrating this essential physical part of ourselves with machines and programs we build ourselves, which might sustain this physical requirement for awareness for eternity.

Will we decide that the machines we have at present, our fragile bodies, are already the optimum vehicle for experience? Are we the optimal experience engine already? Is virtual reality the inescapable direction of evolution? Are we becoming the agents of evolution, through the agency of evolution? Will life one day be lucent dreaming, a dream in which we know we are dreaming, and are 'free to' do what we want? Would we even be free to choose what we want? Will we one day have an authentically free will?

Will we one day be able to design our own experience engines to accommodate our desire for experience? Will the material world as we know it become more or less obsolete, redundant, a mere platform of space-time stability to anchor our experience engines to? Once we can produce virtual realities, our environments could become, ultimately, those of photons and electrons. Many enlightened people will see that they essentially are already, in principle, merely photons and electrons. It is merely a matter of their density!

While we are restricted to adapting our current nervous systems to some cyborg setup, we will at least require oxygen, and some nutrients, and materials. Once we are capable of designing experience engines we could

plug into them. We would no longer require anything but the capacity to build the engines, and energy to produce the experiences, simple electricity. What the future of experience engines will look like (we are currently organic experience engines) is dependent on the nature of awareness. Is awareness a product of our organic existence, or does it merely inhabit it, as the best experience engine currently available?

Is the 'I' merely a linguistic 'artifact' of our natures, and how we define things? Or does it have an independent existence? Is there a 'ghost', an 'I', in this machine we call our 'selves'.

We might define the unit of awareness as an unemployed actor ready to take on a 'role'. This role includes a body, an appearance, and a personality, all of which define their genetic inheritance. A script, a plot and props will define their cultural inheritance. The current institutionalized sets of relationships of power, of duties (costs) and privileges (benefits), will then define their socio-historical inheritance. This forms the 'context' for interactions and defines the 'meaning' of the props, plot, and script, for the 'actor'. All these inheritances combined add up to our holistic inheritance.

The unit of awareness would have, then, no 'baggage' as such. The awareness would be the potential to experience the play and the part. As plays begin, parts evolve, and characters develop, awareness units would emerge into the 'experience', and experience it. That the experience is determined by multi-various interactive determinisms, such as the stage props, the other characters, the plot, the personal scripts, the character descriptions, the limits of the stage, and so on, would not take away from the 'experience'.

Where we must depart the analogy is the level of self-consciousness of the actor. Even the most 'immersed' of actors on the real stage are aware that they are 'playing'. The unit of awareness, however, would be the character, without being self-conscious of it. The unit would not be playing consciously. They would be the character. For them they would be the role. The role and the play would be their life.

Most westerners are familiar and perhaps identify most with the dualist (Descartian) notion of the mind and the body as two separate entities. This is the typical western religious world view and subsequent hegemonic definition of awareness. We consider that we are awareness units inhabiting bodies.

Penrose notes that some scientists have, like me, suggested that self-reflective language loops may account for such notions of being a 'ghost in the machine'. Nietzsche's study of semiotics is very interesting in this context. See 'Convergences' for details.

Earlier most scientists assumed that only humans were 'self-aware' or self-conscious. However we do not have a monopoly on self-awareness. 'The mirror test' devised by Gordon Gallup in the 1970s tests to see if animals are able to recognize themselves in a mirror. One example of the test involves placing a spot of coloring on the skin or fur near the animal's forehead and seeing if they attempt to remove it or at least touch the spot, thus indicating that they recognize that the individual they are seeing in the mirror is themselves. Humans (older than 18 months), great apes (except for gorillas), Chimps, orangutans, bottle nose dolphins, and Asian elephants pass this test.

One view of the nature of awareness that is potentially compelling at present is that awareness is an emergent property (propergent) produced by interactions between the electro-chemical activity within the brain and the electromagnetic fields this activity (such as the firing of neurons) produces. As such awareness has no independent existence. Once the electrical activity in the brain ceases, the electromagnetic fields, and its reflexive artifact 'consciousness', ceases to be re-produced. It ceases to exist. As such it is 'epi-phenomenal'. It has no independent existence. It is no more than the contemporaneous product of the interactions of other things.

This is the 'awareness-of'. However the potential for awareness per-se must be present in all energy, for it to become manifest. To quote one of my philosophical inspirations, Maria (Von Trapp!) 'Nothing comes from nothing, nothing ever could'.

The theosophical definition of awareness and subsequent world view is that it is in fact consciousness which produces and becomes physical matter. I wonder then why a perfect consciousness would produce such an imperfect world. Of course their response would be that the world is the best of all worlds possible.

The Hindu position, also materio-idealistic, is essentially that matter and awareness, or substance and consciousness, are one. I would say that the potential to be conscious or aware is a property of substance.

Buddhists assume that all substance is an illusion produced by consciousness. Of course the world we experience is reflexive of the means we have to experience it, so in some ways it is pure illusion. We take a narrow bandwidth of the electromagnetic spectrum and 'produce' light and vision. The light and vision are more or less our illusions, yet they have an 'analog' in the primary reality of electro-magnetic energy. Certain frequencies of electromagnetic energy do exist, they are not illusory. However the light and vision we experience them as, is an artifact of how our brains 'experience' those frequencies.

We do not experience reality in terms of real-time 'streaming'. We construct our perceptions in our brain. Consider the first time you heard one of your favorite pop songs. At first you couldn't make out all the words. In fact you didn't 'hear' them as such. Only later did they either become discrete, comprehensible words, either through repetition or after you read the lyrics somewhere. Then suddenly you 'heard' the lyrics that were being sung all along. However before this you did not hear them, or you heard something else. It was only after you became aware of the actual lyrics, that you heard them. After this you hear them every time you hear the song. Think about it.

It's the same as when you are exposed to a new language. First you hear a lot of music or babble, rather than discrete, comprehensible words and phrases. Only when you become familiar with the language, or study it explicitly, do you come to recognize discrete language elements. From then on you will be able to identify them easily, often even if they are mumbled. This means that you don't simply 'hear' words. You 'construct' them in your mind from the sounds you hear. You actively listen for particular sounds once you have become 'trained' to hear them. Until then, all you hear is the 'singsong' babble. You hear 'noise' rather than 'language'.

Our eyes are not cameras, and our ears are not tape recorders. We do not directly experience our world. Our perceptions are not passive 'recordings' of our interactions with the world. They are actively constructed in our brains, which form an integral part of our nervous systems. This accounts for 'premature cognitive commitment', among many other phenomena.

If you 'expect' to hear your next-door neighbor's television at 2 a.m., because they have been inconsiderately plaguing you with it for weeks, you are conditioned to mistake other noises such as the wind, the creaking of your bed, or your own rasping nasal breath, for the sorts of sounds you'd expect from a television broadcast. If you expect that the loud music you hear is coming from next-door, you may, according to 'psychoacoustics', 'hear' it coming from next door, rather than from downstairs. I was surprised to find that noise travels so well through the floor, and can appear to be coming from behind a wall instead.

Clay-animation is a good example of how we 'construct' a free-flowing movement out of discrete images. The same applies to the individual frames of film, and the flashes of pixels we see on our television screens. Even when we read we don't just simply register what is there.

The phenomena known as 'synesthesia' may also be revealing. Those who experience synesthesia 'hear' colors, and 'see' sounds. This illustrates the fact that the brain actively constructs images and sounds out of the available materials, rather than merely passively gathering, collecting, or receiving them.

Electromagnetic radiation in the 'outside world' is 'encoded' and transformed into our 'perceptions'. There is always some 'algorithm' or 'program' at work tuning into the electromagnetic spectrum and encoding it into what we perceive as color, sound, vision, music, and so on. The color is produced by our brains from particular narrow bandwidths of the electromagnetic spectrum. Synaethaestic brains convert different bandwidths into color and sound than the more typical brain does.

Questions concerning the nature of awareness or consciousness are the most fundamental of all questions that can be raised. Everything 'out there' might be an illusion, or a simple mathematical algorithm. However what interests us most of all is the basic potential to be aware, rather than the capacity to be aware of something. If they are one and the same then awareness is a mere contemporaneous epiphenomena that is produced, and then ceases to

be re-produced. If they are different things, then there is hope, or dread, that awareness may be a primal property, and therefore eternal.

It should be possible to replicate human behavior, and develop an external intelligence, what people often refer to as artificial intelligence, by replicating the events that happen during brain events. To animate is to provide an urge, to motivate. Machines can be animated by programming the need for particular experiences. A program for generating a meta algorithm or master program could act as the balance scales. These algorithmic scales would compare needs in the presence of more complex events defined by a conflict of interests, needs, or desires.

The simplest conflict of interests would be the inability to satisfy mutually exclusive urges. This is a situation where satisfying one need would forever exclude the opportunity for satisfying the other. The outcomes are terminal, so in this case the decision may be difficult to arrive at. However it is a binary decision situation in which the algorithm can either select a or b. In this sense it is simple. To be or not to be, is one of these questions!

But you cannot have your cake and eat it too. The more complex but non-terminal conflicts arise out of Pareto-efficiency and opportunity cost. Opportunity cost is intrinsic to any situation where more than one desire can be satisfied, but only one can be satisfied with the available resources at a particular time. In reality most costs are opportunity costs.

If you have x dollars, and each model car costs x dollars, then you can buy either model a or b or c or d. The cost of choosing model a is not being able to enjoy models b, c, and d. You must sacrifice the ownership of models b, c, and d in order to own a. You must sacrifice the consumption of many experiences in order to consume any particular experience.

If you have enough money for a holiday to either Australia, Europe, or Asia, then deciding on Europe means denying yourself Australia and Asia. The real cost of any decision is the opportunities forgone as a result. The trip to Australia didn't cost \$10,000. It cost a trip to Europe or Asia, or whatever else that \$10,000 could otherwise have bought.

It may well be that the potential for awareness latent in all energy merely requires the appropriate 'forms' to manifest as consciousness or 'awareness -of'. As long as our 'robot' has the appropriate forms, it may become 'aware-of', and thus 'conscious'.

The human ego and its fear of death

The complete identification of an actor with their 'part' would lead to a fear of 'parting' with the 'character', of a 'final exit'. The ego, which is the concept of individuation, of the 'self' as more than the actor in the play, is the force in the 'ghost in the machine' analogy. The ego denies determinism, as it wants to be 'cause', to write the play, to be the 'creator', the director, author and manager. The ego wants to be god. This is why the ego 'believes' in creation, in cause, and in God.

The ego is a property of the human organism, a propergent of the 'Uber-self', which seeks to distance itself from the interaction-outcome nature of the universe. It seeks to separate itself from the universe, to become independent from it, to be 'in control'. The ego is produced by, and is reflexive of, insecurity. It is the ego that produces the notion of a 'soul' with timeless integrity, which is not prey to the interaction-outcome conditions and 'events' of the 'physical' world.

The ego seeks to dominate, so that the 'self' has all the necessary resources to secure its survival and 'reproduction'. The ego is a security unit, intent on 'gaining control', and independent 'power'. What is ironic about this is that the individual is the outcome of interactive determinism, and as such its very strivings are interactively determined, even when it appears to demonstrate 'control', or the freedom to manipulate evolution itself.

Humans are the product of an evolution and it is always the products of evolution which interact to determine which products will survive and reproduce and which will not. All products therefore become the agents of evolution. They become the next round of competitors for 'niches' and 'trades'. They constitute the 'environment' of all the other products of evolution.

Precedent states interact to produce antecedent states. The agent is the agency which produces the agent which is the agency and so on. The agents interact with all parts of their 'environment', which is therefore dynamic and equally interactively determined. Evolution is an agency. The products of evolution are the agents of evolution. We have always been active in the process of our own evolution.

Up until now we have been active in negative selection at a socio-cultural level. Our positive selection to date has been minimal, and guided by lust for sexual satisfaction and political-material privileges. The filtering has mostly been done by our environment through negative selection. We are entering a zone in our evolution where our activities at a genetic and molecular level allow us to initiate ever greater positive selections. We are entering a period where positive selection has the potential to negate the need for, or to minimize, the suffering produced by negative selection.

The concept of reincarnation is a propergent of interactions between the ego, and the ego's awareness of the looming death of the organism it associates itself with. It is reflexive of our mortal condition. The ego fears losing control. The notion of maintaining a continuity of awareness, of being essentially 'itself' over different life spans, is appealing to it. The ego 'feels' itself to be the essential unit of awareness, an incorruptible and non-perishable soul, which will transmigrate to another body. The ghost will find a new machine to inhabit, to 'continue' on.

This leads, necessarily reflexively, to the invention of past lives and reincarnation. However, if memories cannot survive Alzheimer's, then how could they possibly survive death? There are many forms of 'amnesia'. We can even lose the ability to form new short-term memories. All of this makes the notion of memories of past-lives absurd. If we are going to define ourselves as eternal, and project ourselves into the future, into future lives, then we must reflexively and teleologically construct past lives which we have previously lived. The teleological belief is then internally consistent and coherent and seamless. The loop is closed! The argument is at least speciously compelling, as it is internally consistent and coherent.

This is the nature of circular or teleological arguments. This is why they often deflect interrogation, until someone starts interrogating the argument from outside the circle, from outside the loop. Only then are the intrinsic, implicit assumptions made explicit. Only then do we see that the justification of one potential assumption

is really based on a further assumption which itself has yet to have been demonstrated to be compelling. The argument then reveals its teleology, and comes apart at the 'seems' (Hamlet will get the pun!)

The ego seeks security, peace of mind, and solace in believing that it is a basic unit which will inhabit new bodies in new places, whilst maintaining its essential integrity over space-time.

Language itself may be the most basic origin of the mind-body dualism. If I can refer to myself as a thing, then my Self takes on a distinct degree of linguistic 'otherness' from me. In a muddled sort of way the thing thinking about something takes on an independent existence from the thing it is thinking about.

My friend Stephen Macdermott provided me with some arguments which prompted me to the following line of reasoning. As we are social animals, our survival and reproduction depend on our ability to read our fellow humans, in order to be able to interpret and anticipate their behaviors and moods, and in so doing be able to communicate with them, and engage in transactions to our mutual advantage. This ability to understand our fellows would be useful in pack hunting strategies where stealth and co-ordination were essential. We are more likely to find mates if we can empathize with others, imagine what they are thinking and feeling, and respond appropriately, even 'mendaciously', as required. Modern salespeople talk of overcoming objections. Neuro-linguistic programmers talk of mirroring and leading. The dance of courting requires anticipation and leading, and overcoming objections. If you can read your opponent or potential partner, then you can meet their needs, overcome their objections, and lead them in the direction you wish. I have since found similar arguments in Nietzsche. See 'Convergences' for details.

Stephen suggested that we have evolved a sort of internal model of our fellow humans. They exist both in the external world, and in our internal world, what I would refer to as our secondary reality. We know that we are more or less the same as the others. Once we have others existing in our internal or secondary reality, their existence in there can produce notions of an independent existence of our own selves.

Of course we also model our expectations, interpretations, and anticipations of others on our awareness of our own natures, our own emotions, ambitions, feelings, fears, and motivations. We project ourselves upon others. We model our expectations to some degree on how we believe we ourselves would behave or react in similar situations. Our understandings and predictions about others behaviors and reactions would be a combination of past experience of both our own, and others', behaviors in situations similar to the ones we are interacting within at the time.

Our internal models of our own behaviors, motivations, and reactions, and those of others as we have experienced, interpreted, and actively constructed them from memories and our own projections, form a secondary reality. They form an internal reality that, due to imperfections in our internal modeling, exists to some degree independent of the primary reality. This internal reality is therefore uncoupled to some degree from the external one. Presto! We have two independent but co-dependent realities. We have an internal one, which we might refer to as the mind or soul, and the external one which this mind or soul inhabits, the body, and the physical universe. Thus we have 'produced' a 'ghost' and a 'machine', a duality of 'body' and 'soul'.

Internal models of our own bodies will also provide advantages. We feel everything at the brain end of our nervous systems. We feel pleasure and pain in the brain. The nerve endings that end in our big toes or genitals, or eyes or ears, merely transmit nerve signals to the brain. Our brain must contain an internal model of the whole body in order to locate the source of each nerve signal, and place it within the correct context of the whole body. If you stimulate a nerve between the brain and the nerve ending, you will feel pleasure or pain at the site of the nerve ending. This accounts for phantom pain in amputated limbs. Reflexively, it also accounts for why sexual arousal can occur in the brain. Think about something sexy and your genitals will respond. Think about food and you'll start to salivate. Advertising works wonders by targeting this internal model.

People with excellent co-ordination and body-awareness have superior and more precise internal models of their own bodies, and perhaps the physics of balls and bats and so on. They are able to produce subtle and precise physical movements at will. Their internal models reflect their bodies so well that they can imagine a complex set of movements in their minds, and then reproduce them with their bodies. They have excellent 3-d modeling. They

have a superior sense of orientation, and of the space-time in which their bodies can move. Of course practice improves these internal models, providing increasingly subtle and complex feedback to the brain, until it can reproduce particular sets of movements automatically, using 'muscle memory'. For this reason physical activity in young children is essential while the body is developing. People who miss out on such activity and development often have trouble developing good co-ordination and balance later in life.

It was once the case that girls were not allowed to participate in physical activity. They had no chance to develop this internal model, and so failed to develop good coordination, balance, and body-awareness. This lack of development was defined as innate. It was claimed that females were by nature not as good at sport as males. This was used as a justification for denying females access to opportunities to develop their physical co-ordination, eye-hand co-ordination, and so on.

They were denied opportunities to participate in sporting activities that would allow for the accumulation of such skill-sets. They were denied the opportunity to develop sophisticated, precise internal models of their bodies. This teleological, self-fulfilling prophecy was employed by men to prove their superiority over women. It was used by men to justify denying girls access to sporting facilities and opportunities.

Today girls play soccer more or less as well as most boys do, as they have been encouraged as much as the boys to develop their internal models, their co-ordination, their balance, their body-awareness, through the same activities that boys participate in from an early age.

If you start too late, then you will be self-conscious of your lack of co-ordination, compared to your teammates, and this will lower your ability to concentrate and focus. You will be too busy worrying about how stupid you look, and getting flustered, to catch up for lost time in developing skill-sets that your 'competitors' had spent the last decade accumulating.

So the development of internal models was also related to our own personal physical prowess. Being able to throw a spear with force and precision was of course of benefit in hunting. Being able to deftly duck and weave from an attacking animal would be of benefit. These would allow you to eat and survive, and impress the opposite sex by bringing home the bacon. Your genes would have a better chance of being passed onto the next generation.

In the early days empathy probably played less of a role than protection and provision of food and so on. As food and shelter became more abundant, and our mere survival became less problematic, the ability to provide emotional resources such as understanding, compassion, sympathy, empathy, and so on, would have become more significant in courtship and mating, and hence reproduction. As such, over millions of years, those individuals with superior internal modeling would be more successful at reproducing.

And While the great hunter was off providing for the womenfolk, the 'understanding' male was back at the cave with the womenfolk, reproducing his 'internal modeling' capabilities, ensuring that the next generation would inherit these superior social skills. The species could be expected to accumulate, over time, more and more individuals with superior internal modeling.

Our internal models of others, and ourselves, produce a secondary reality, an internal reality. The existence of this reality, in parallel with the external one, may account for the feelings and notions of the existence of a spiritual world in parallel with the physical one. The leap from that to assuming or feeling that we are ultimately independent of the physical world, as Operating Thetans or souls or spirits, is a conceivable one, one that is not too hard to imagine. We do operate on, and therefore in one sense, in, virtual reality. We operate from the internal models we have of ourselves, of others, and of the rest of reality.

We often fail to keep our models current through feedback from the external reality. We can, and often do, end up in teleological loops of un-reality when we begin feeding-back our own outputs as inputs, 'constructing' reality from within our own internal models, our secondary realities, rather than seeking inputs from the 'external' reality. This is what happens when we make assumptions and base our models of reality on them, rather than on compelling arguments and observable 'realities'.

Many people come to live in biblical truth rather than empirical truth. They cease interacting with the external world. They operate on closed-loop circuits, feeding back on their own internal realities, on their own assumptions. Sooner or later they lose touch with reality, even with the ability to accept external inputs. They lose the power to escape the loops of their internal models. They reject any later inputs which are not consistent with their earlier assumptions.

In the event that our bodies produce our awareness, and are not just experience engines to produce experiences for it to be aware of, then our internal modeling behaviors would account for our misconceptions of a mind-body dualism. I say in the event, as we have not yet been able to define awareness well enough to say that there is a compelling argument either way.

Our consideration of the potentials for internal modeling to construct false impressions regarding the existence of independent units of awareness, contributes to our overall opportunities for approaching the question about the nature of awareness. They provide us with potential 'angles' for considering the fundamental nature of ourselves. They allow our interrogations to be more productive. They provide ways of asking and seeking, approaches with the potential to produce more definitive answers.

Can we get further with our inquiries, or do we already have the answer, but simply don't want it to be the answer? Can we refine our reasoning and reflections to come further than we have, and resolve the question of the nature of awareness, of consciousness? What questions or directions might prove productive? Or do we have the obvious answer already, but hoped to find a more emotionally satisfying one? Is it really as simple as the perhaps self-evident facts that we are conceived, become more and more aware of who and what we are, only to die, and no longer exist at any level? Is it simply the case that awareness exists only contemporaneously with the interactions that produce it, like the note sounded by a string once it is plucked, that disappears once the string ceases vibrating? Should we perhaps focus on the music, and enjoying what, if anything, life has to offer us, rather than the fact that one day the music will be over for us?

When we are gone there will still be music, only a new generation of listeners will be enjoying it, or being really irritated by it, and wishing they'd turn the damn noise down, or even better, off.

Towards a definition for Life and Awareness

We define hierarchies of existence, and place things with awareness at the top. We consider intelligence as the highest form of awareness, as it exhibits the ability to critically reflect on what it is aware of, to relate things to one another, and hence experience meaning.

We should consider the non-dreaming part of sleep and other forms of temporary unconsciousness, as these are moments during which an alive person exhibits properties associated in the popular language culture with not being aware. The defining property of these moments is that we apparently have no experience, and are not responsive to outside stimuli. Of course, whether we do actually experience anything during these moments is questionable, that is, the assumption that we don't experience anything may be problematic. We may in fact have experiences, but be merely unable to recall them when we become conscious.

This leads to the nightmarish proposition that it is possible that we experience extreme agony under anesthetic, but we are incapable of expressing it due to the paralyzing effect of drugs. Afterwards we have no recollection of the experience. Therefore we do not demand any changes to the procedures. This was in fact the case with surgery on infants, where up until recently it was assumed that the infant nervous system had not developed to the point of being able to feel the pain of open heart surgery. Up until recently such surgery was done without anesthesia or pain killers. More recent experiences with adults during surgery indicates that patients often do experience pain during surgery, and are merely unable to make any gestures to the surgeons to indicate this, due to the paralyzing drugs they have been given.

Recently dogs have been placed in stasis, in suspended animation, by replacing their blood with other fluids. The dogs exhibited no signs of life, no circulation, no brain activity, no respiration or breathing, while they were in stasis. They were for all intensive purpose dead. They were then re-animated. They continued to function as they had before their death. They had been brought back from the dead!

Perhaps we can define an organism as a discrete entity with awareness of itself in relation to those things that are not itself, that is, its environment. At what level an organism is aware is problematic to define. As all 'wholes' can at some level of composition be seen to be parts of greater wholes, and most parts can be broken down further, we must consider whether constituent parts of 'wholes' are aware of their existence. In the same way that we are, as parts of groups, societies, or ecosystems, aware of our distinct existence as entities, perhaps our livers are aware too, of being part of a biological unit, the human body.

Alternatively, perhaps our liver is just as unaware as we are, of belonging to some greater organism of which it and we are merely a component. Perhaps the various cells that make up our body are aware of their own existence, but unaware of their 'roles' in maintaining our survival, as workers in our organs, immune systems, and so on. They may have some intrinsic motivation to attack 'foreign' invaders, or transport oxygen, without any awareness that they are contributing to the survival of a larger aware entity.

We are not really aware of our own individual roles in the larger systems and organizations we are more or less integrated within. We are often not even aware of the larger organization or society of which we are a part. Our motivations and experiences are personal, even as we are contributing to some greater whole which we don't comprehend or experience.

When we talk about awareness, we are usually talking of awareness of. The ultimate question, however, is about the nature of the potential to be aware at all, that is, the nature of the actual potential to be aware of something. Without senses, we might still have the potential to be aware of simply existing. Once we have sensory perception, we can then be aware of our 'selves' and our environment. Add memory to this and we can be aware of 'change'.

Add intelligence, the capacity to compare things, to relate things, including the 'past' to the 'present' (which reflexively produces the 'meanings' we call 'change', and 'space-time') and we have 'meaning' per se. Meaning emerges from becoming aware of how things relate to each other, of how they interact, of what interaction-outcome events

occur. Of course there is also the 'meaning' that is reflexive of our inherited genetic constitution. This is ultimately what rules out free will. We inherit some intrinsic 'meanings' which we can never be free of. These inherited meanings determine our experiences of things, and therefore our definitions of them.

However meaning and intelligence are not necessary to defining awareness. It might be possible, as a rock, to feel our 'rock-ness'. We would be aware of existing. It is this most basic concept, the ability to be aware of anything, which we are considering here.

Awareness is not necessary for the functioning of life as such. Processes can occur and reproduce without any need for consciousness or awareness. However the theory of evolution provides compelling explanations for the reproduction of awareness once it emerges, and for its continued development in terms of sophistication and complexity.

It is important to consider that all awareness units we can observe seem to develop or 'evolve'. We may not be able to agree when awareness 'begins', but once it is present, it tends to develop in terms of complexity and sophistication. Old people tend to be wiser than children. We take it as given that we are more conscious and intelligent than our Neanderthal ancestors. If you argue, as some people do, that consciousness actively produces the universe, and drives all evolution, then you are implicitly assuming that awareness is already complete and perfect. If it is, then why is it apparently dependent on a painful and slow process of evolution to express itself?

In a competitive environment, sophisticated and complex awareness units enjoy an advantage over the less sophisticated, in terms of competition for resources necessary for survival and reproduction. Intelligence is a higher form of awareness, as it allows us to predict and actively 'manage' interactions, to consciously produce outcomes that can satisfy our needs, and provide benefits. It ultimately allows for the emergence of 'technology'. Populations in possession of more advanced technologies tend to win any competition with their less 'advanced' competitors.

In eastern spirituality the soul is more or less defined as a primerty, a primal property. All souls are of the same primerty, by definition, and so even as we are individual, we are all the same, and share the experience of this same-ness, this one-ness. This is the solution to the apparent paradox of individuation and one-ness. We all 'resonate' at the same frequency. We may be 'tuned' differently as an outcome of inhabiting particular bodies, but once free of these bodies, our 'natural tuning' will return.

Mathematics is fundamentally constructed from nothings 0s, and somethings, 1's. When you combine these 1's you can end up with fantastically complex and sophisticated algorithms. We tend to forget that even the most astoundingly confusing and complicated mathematical puzzle is reducible to the simple primerties 1, and the simple algorithm of addition. Maths is just lots of 1's, ultimately. In the same way, we may all be 1's. We are all individual 1's, but all 1's, with the exact same properties.

We inherit different properties, different algorithms, different bodies and personalities, however we are, essentially, the same. This is all pretty intuitive once you comprehend a few concepts, and escape the ruling hegemonic social reality, and its inherited 'mystifying' baggage.

The religions of the bibles hang onto the idea of maintaining a 'personality' after death, in heaven, or the after-life. The personality must be shed, in all eastern religions, in order to experience the 'whole-ness' the 'one-ness' of spiritual bliss. In the biblical religions, all that is sought is some modicum of modesty and subjection to 'the one god' and his earthly representatives. We 'westerners' all fear losing our sense of individuality, our 'me-ness', our 'separateness'. We have inherited a cult of individuality. We fear losing ourselves.

The ego fears death. The ego has 'evolved' along with our 'intelligence'. Most people will assume that something exists because it serves a function, and much worse, even to serve a function. Religion may have served a valuable function, or, we may have managed to survive despite it. The same might be said for ego.

Awareness may be the contemporaneously re-produced epiphenomenal propergent of some forms of interactions. A unit of awareness perhaps exists only as long as the interactions from which it emerges, which produce it, are re-produced. Perhaps it has no independent existence. It may merely be an artifact, a property of the interaction rather than one of the things interacting. It would then be like the flame that flickers and evaporates. A

flame doesn't have an independent existence. It is a resultant or product. It is an epi-phenomenon. Once it is deprived of oxygen or fuel it is no longer re-produced.

We have no compelling alternative than to trace at least the particular qualities of our awareness back to the D.N.A from which it emerges. The primerty by definition must have the potential to become aware. There is no other compelling explanation for the existence of awareness. In this sense the primerty ultimately produces D.N.A. This D.N.A then evolves its particular nature.

No-one can state at which point something can be defined as exhibiting the quality of being aware. How are we to define this 'point', assuming one exists? Perhaps everything, every element, every primerty, is 'potentially' aware, and it is merely a question of acquiring sensory perceptions with which to be aware of something, including a self. In this sense D.N.A may be aware of being. It manifests its potentials and grows into a fetus. At some critical point this fetus has sensory inputs which mean it can be aware of things.

The development of more sophisticated sensory inputs and then means for processing these inputs and constructing 'meaning' is just a matter of the manifestation of the potentials that have accumulated during the evolution of the D.N.A.

This process produces a direction, towards sophistication and complexity, as complexity and sophistication tend to confer a competitive advantage, or functional adaptation, convergence, upon an organism. Mutation is random, but because of competition, only the most adapted of mutations survive and reproduce.

Evolution is the direction that emerges from a process. It, the direction towards greater complexity and sophistication, is simply the outcome of a process. The process is the accumulation of random mutations in phenotypes exposed to the filtering effects of competition and negative selection. There is no director. Evolution is the direction that emerges, and not the process itself.

Defining life

In formulating a definition for life, we must consider which properties are necessary and sufficient to defining something as being alive. Life forms exhibit what may be called cybernetic behaviors. This means they respond to stimuli and feedback from their environment. In doing so they manage to secure the things they require to survive and reproduce. Living things can be viewed as closed systems that require external sources of energy. In this sense they are not self-maintaining. Failure to secure the resources required to support themselves results in their death.

We will tend to have a strong anthropocentric bias in defining life. The more things are like us, the more readily we will ascribe them the properties sentience, consciousness, awareness, intelligence, and even 'life'. We can also only consider forms of life that exist, or have left measurable records of their existence. This is another of our implicit 'selection biases'. We can only select, from the greater pool of all possible forms of life, those that currently exist, or that we have records of, in the form of fossils and so on. Our bias is 'selective' in terms of what things we can directly or indirectly observe. It is possible that life forms exist, or have existed, with properties different from those which we have direct or indirect experience of. Perhaps we are not capable of observing them by the senses and means at our disposal. Our awareness of what forms life can take is therefore biased by such unknowable variables.

We are further biased by the limits of our human ways of knowing. If something behaves as if it is alive, then we define it as being alive. There may be living, conscious, entities that do not exhibit the behaviors that we expect of 'living' things. Our behaviorist bias would exclude them from our definition. We would not, teleologically, experience them as alive and aware. This would, iteratively and reflexively, reinforce the teleology of our definitions of life and consciousness. It would entrench our bias as hegemonic. Our bias, our assumptions, would then become 'naturalized' and 'normalized', taken for granted. It would corrupt our whole 'noetic structure', our whole model of the universe, all our ways of defining and relating to our environment.

Some people have trouble recognizing the intelligence of dogs, cats, and pigs. We are more comfortable eating pigs if we define them as significantly different from us. However in general, most people actively repress, deny, and numb their natural empathy for 'farm' animals, for their experience of life, and their experience of the unnecessary suffering that we inflict on them, simply in order to 'enjoy' eating them.

Many people have empathy for whales, but few empathize with tuna. In some cultures dog meat is a delicacy, an aphrodisiac. Many westerners could not stomach eating man's best friend, no matter how hungry or impotent they were.

Our sentimentality appears to be culturally determined. Recent studies have in fact demonstrated that pigs are in fact more intelligent than dogs. I guess pigs must taste better, so people have deliberately avoided empathizing with them, to reconcile the fact of an animal's sentience with their desire to eat their succulent corpses. It is interesting in this regard that Judaism and Islam both proscribe the eating of pork.

Evolutionary psychology might argue that dogs provided more value as companions, hunting assistants, guards, and so on, than as 'meat', and so a synergy emerged as those humans who empathized with dogs fared better than those who ate them, and so came to dominate the genetic makeup of humanity in general.

The founder of the Christian church, Paul did state, according to the bible I read, that it was 'better' to be a vegetarian, yet most carnivorous 'Christians' still tend to refer to the bible in an attempt to legitimate their cruelty. Of course the hegemonic social reality validates them in this.

Cybernetics refers to the ability of something to respond to feedback from its environment. We tend to distinguish between automatic responses, reactions, and deliberate ones, actions. However we will have to consider how valid such definitions are. It is conventional to define behaviors in non-humans as instinctive, while defining the very same sorts of behaviors as conscious, considered, or intended, when exhibited by humans. In this sense we appear to ascribe different properties or qualities to the same sorts of behaviors, dependent merely on whether they are human or not, and whether we 'empathize' with them or not. These definitions, as naturalized in popular

language culture, are problematic. In order to reveal in what way they are problematic we must consider the nature of intention.

We make a significant distinction between life forms that we perceive to exhibit the property of awareness, and those that do not. Our reference points are always human, and reflexive of our human ways of experiencing things.

A cybernetic system exhibits reflexive responses. Plant processes such as photo-tropism and hydro-tropism appear to be examples of cybernetic behavior. Plants grow towards light and moisture. The Popular language culture, however, excludes plant life forms from the class of things with the property awareness. The popular language culture is limited to ascribing awareness to things that exhibit awareness in ways that we experience awareness.

In many ways our understanding of the nature of awareness is still tentative and limited.

I am, as I am aware, but I am not necessarily what I believe I am

Awareness is both a concept at the highest level of abstraction, and the most basic concept and language element we have in defining our own existence. Many philosophers have, over the course of the history of philosophy, compellingly argued that we cannot unquestioningly trust our senses, as they are limited and fallible. However, even if nothing exists outside of our thinking, then at least our thoughts must exist, and we must exist at least on the level of being something that has thoughts. I think therefore I am. Cogito ergo sum.

We can, however, be more precise. We have thoughts, therefore 'we' exist to have them, though we are not necessarily what we believe we are, in the same way that everything is not necessarily how we perceive it to be. We cannot unquestioningly, without interrogation, trust our current 'awareness' or perceptions of what we are, or of the nature of awareness.

Quantum Physics: and reality as a construction of the brain

If you could see the body as a physicist could see it, all you'd see is atoms. These atoms of particles move at lightning speeds around huge empty spaces. These particles aren't material objects at all. They are fluctuations of energy and information in a vastness of energy and information. 99.99% of your body is 'space'.

Sir John Eccles, who won the Nobel Prize in physiology and medicine several years ago, made the statement, 'I want you to understand that there are no colors in the real world. That there are no textures in the real world. There are no fragrances in the real world. There is no beauty, there is no ugliness. Nothing of the sort. Out there is a chaos of energy soup and energy fields. Literally. We take that and somewhere inside ourselves we create a world. Somewhere inside ourselves it all happens.'

Physics tells us that four basic forces, gravity, strong attraction, weak attraction, and electromagnetism, make up everything that exists. Strong attraction holds the nucleus of an atom together. Weak attraction is a force that is responsible for transmutation of elements and radioactive decay. Electromagnetism is that which we experience as light, heat and electricity. Everything that exists is made up of these forces.' And ultimately these forces come from one unified force which scientists today call the Unified Field.

French physicist Bernard D'Espagnat, writing in 1979 about quantum reality, said that 'the entire notion of an external, fixed, objective world now lies in conflict not only with quantum theory, but in facts drawn from actual experiments...' He considered that everything in the universe must constitute a single indivisible whole. This makes Einstein's proposition that instantaneous changes could occur in apparently widely separated systems intuitive, as in fact all systems are part of one whole.

Of course David Hume warns us that it is human nature to seek to unify things into a unity that are in fact independent. Read more in 'Convergences'.

A hologramic brain and a holistic universe

Bohm maintains that the information of the entire universe is contained in each of its parts. There is, he says, a stunning example of this principle in photography: the hologram. Hologram literally means 'whole message'.

A hologram is a specially constructed image which, when illuminated by a laser beam, seems suspended in three dimensional space. The most incredible feature of holograms is that any piece of it, if illuminated with coherent light, provides an image of the entire hologram. The information of the whole is contained in each part. This principle, says Bohm, extends to the universe at large. The universe is constructed on the same principles as the hologram. His theory rests on concepts that flow from modern physics. The world is an indivisible whole.

Buddha argued that phenomena arise together in a mutually, holistically interdependent, reflexive manner. Buddha used the analogy of 'Indra's web', a multi-dimensional spider's web covered with an infinite number of dew drops. Each dew-drop reflects the reflections of all the other dew-drops ad infinitum. Buddha stated that his 'awakening' or 'Bodhi' emerged from this insight. Indra's web might be the equivalent of the 'hologramic' view of reality.

For Bohm, order and unity are spread throughout the universe in a way which escapes our senses. In the same way that order and organization are spread throughout the hologram. Each part of the universe contains enough information to reconstitute the whole. The form and structure of the entire universe is enfolded within each part.

For many working physicists, these concepts are inescapable conclusions that flow from quantum mechanics and relativity. It is crucial to appreciate the scope of these implications. We frequently assume that quantum physics applies only to the diminutive realm of nature - electrons, protons and so on, and that relativity has only to do with massive objects of cosmic proportions such as stars, galaxies, nebulae and so on. But Bohm's contention is that we are right in the middle of these phenomena. Ultimately the entire universe, with all its 'particles' including those constituting human beings, their laboratories, observing instruments and so on, has to be understood as a single undivided whole, in which analysis into separately and independently existent parts has no fundamental status.

What are the implications of a holographic universe? As part of the universe, do we have holographic features ourselves that allow us to comprehend a holographic universe? This question has been answered affirmatively by Stanford neuro-physiologist Karl Pribram. In an attempt to account for key observations about brain function which for decades have puzzled brain physiologists, Pribram arrived at a radical proposal: the hologram is a model brain function. In essence, the brain is the 'photographic plate' on which all the information in the universe is encoded.

I once speculated myself that perhaps the brain contained the entire universe within its structure, as a sort of microcosmic reflection.

When the proposals of Bohm and Pribram are conceptually joined, a new model of man emerges: we use a brain that encodes information hologrammically; and it is a hologram that is a part of an even larger hologram, the universe itself.

Pribram's radical suggestions are founded on work that originated in the laboratory of one of the pioneers of modern neurophysiology, Karl Lashley. At a time when it was popularly believed that there were specific centers in the brain for practically every human function - such as speech, vision, appetite, sleep and so on. Lashley demonstrated that this was apparently not true for memory. Working with animals, he found that even when bulk of the cerebral cortex was surgically removed, leaving only a remnant intact, the memory of how to perform specific tasks remained. The rapidity and accuracy of the performance was frequently attenuated, but the knowledge was retained.

These findings fit poorly with existing theories about how information is stored in the brain. It was as if memory was spread everywhere in the cortex - but how? Pribram reasoned that the brain contained the memory in

each of its parts. The analogy to a hologram was obvious. The entire memory pattern could be found throughout the cerebral cortex if the information had originally been encoded hologrammically.

In most right handed persons, the left side of the brain is presumed to control the movements of the right side of the body. In instances where the left side of the brain is injured - for example through a stroke or with a trauma, paralysis or profound weakness of the right side of the body is the predictable result. A physician, Richard Restak, has reported a case in a twenty one year old female in which the entire left side of the brain was removed surgically in order to control epileptic seizures that were unmanageable with any other known form of therapy. The results of the therapy were astonishing.

Although the seizures were stopped, within a few weeks the woman began to regain control of the right side of her body. She was able to return to work and to lead an active social life. Where did the right side of her body receive its motor information with the left side of the brain in the surgeon's pail?

In 1975 a similar case was reported by Smith & Sugar. A six year old male underwent total removal of the left cerebral hemisphere because of intractable epileptic seizures. Conventional neuro-physiological wisdom asserts that the left side of the cerebral cortex is responsible for our speech, mathematical reasoning and logical thought in general, and that the right cerebral hemisphere controls our intuitive, non-rational, non-verbal forms of thought. Yet this young man grew up to become a gifted student, proficient in verbal reasoning and language abilities, testing even into the gifted range on standard intelligence tests.

Secondary realities

Each of us experiences the world in our unique ways, and so in fact each of us lives in a secondary world of our own. We experience the world indirectly. In fact this is a prerequisite to experiencing anything. If we were to directly experience things, then modern physics agrees with a lot of ancient metaphysics in telling us that all we'd be able to 'perceive' would be fields of energy. Because all that really exists are reflexive 'states' of energy. Energy = mass times a constant (the speed of light) squared. Energy and matter exist merely reflexively rather than absolutely. A change in states produces energy, and a change in energy produces a change in states. Thus matter-energy is in a constant, reflexive state of becoming.

There is nothing to see or hear or feel or smell or taste. There are only varying frequencies of electromagnetic radiation. Our brains construct everything we experience from these fields of energy. Our eyes absorb a narrow bandwidth of the electromagnetic spectrum from which our brains construct 'light'. Our ears adsorb another bandwidth we define as 'sound'. Strong attractors hold atoms together to form elements, and the compounds formed by these are held together by weak attractors. When we 'feel' something, we don't actually touch it. We make contact with its electromagnetic fields, and this 'information' is relayed to the brain, from which constructs 'tactile sensations'. What was once metaphysics is today's cutting edge physics.

We experience a world that is effectively constructed inside our heads. However there is or was a corresponding phenomenon in the external world for each internal experience we have. Or more precisely, that part of the world that is 'less integrated with us', which we experience and define as not-us, as our 'environment'. Remember that our awareness might be an individual 'monad', (or alternatively it may be a part of a greater whole), but everything that we think of as 'us' is actually a shared part of the entire universe. Our sense of 'individuation, and our 'bodies' per se, only exist in our minds, as an artifact of our natures, and how we experience things.

Modern chemistry and physics show that complexity is the product of simplicity. Everything can be seen to be a manifestation of different levels and therefore 'states' of energy. Everything we experience in the universe is a manifestation of changes in the levels and states of energy. It is a function of our constitution, our senses, our ways of perceiving and constructing experiences, that we experience particular levels and states as heat, light, 'solid' matter, sound, smell, liquid, gas, or electromagnetism.

The primary reality is the 'consensus' our awarenesses come to. This is what I refer to when I talk about a 'primary' reality. Fire will 'burn' as part of this 'consensus' even if you subscribe to some social reality in which fire isn't 'supposed' to burn. The primary reality of consensus, or laws of physics if you like, is 'objective' in this way.

While there may be 'social' consensus regarding the dominant or hegemonic social reality, it is in yet another step removed from the primary reality.

Optimalisation requires that we align our social reality as close as possible to the primary reality. The primary reality is, as far as our human experience is concerned, the ultimate reality. Sacrificing virgins to social reality gods won't produce the desired outcomes if there are no gods. The virgins will still be dead in the primary reality, but their sacrifice will produce no improvements for humanity. What we need to aspire to is 'convergence' between what we believe to be true, and what is true, as far as this is possible.

We define or experience the world according to our own unique algorithms and past experiences. Each of us will 'experience' an event differently. Our individual experience will depend on how we have been 'taught' to interpret or 'see' the information that our senses 'deliver' to our awareness. If the theory of premature cognitive commitment is true, then our earliest experiences actual determine the structure of our nervous system in a way that determines how we experience things for the rest of our lives. In terms of education, it is clear that we are 'trained' to seek out particular stimuli as significant, and ignore other stimuli as unimportant. We are also conditioned as to how we will automatically, passively react to stimuli, in the absence of active, conscious deliberate consideration of how we should respond.

We are trained to 'reconcile' what we are told is self-evidently true, what we think 'ought' to be true, what we wish were true, or what would be convenient to be true, with the primary reality. We are taught things that distort our perceptions, our inductions, and our deductions.

As the reality we experience is always the one that is produced in our brains, our minds, or our awareness, there will always be the opportunity to produce errors. For the most part we passively consume errors that we inherit, and go on to re-produce them.

The energy fields in which we 'float' contain information from which our awareness constructs a primary reality. The brain then 'interprets' this primary reality according to its unique inherited nature. This holistic inheritance includes our genetic and an educational-cultural inheritance. The outcome of this process is the secondary world which exists in our minds.

The 'social reality' is the general way of seeing things that we inherit from the culture in which we live. For many people the social reality is their secondary reality, and they assume this to be the complete and exclusive reality.

One objective of philosophy is to enlighten people so that they are capable of distinguishing between at least these three realities, the primary, social, and individual subjective realities.

Philosophers seek to de-construct and then reconstruct their secondary realities, and to decouple them from the social reality of the culture they live in. They seek a convergence between their subjective reality and any external, objective realities that may exist. They seek to teach others how to de-construct the social reality they have socio-cultural-educationally inherited, and to empower them to actively, consciously, reconstruct their own secondary realities. Buddha, Jesus, the writers of the Bhavagad' Gita, and the many other prophets, were fundamentally philosophers, and teachers. In many versions of the new testaments Jesus was called 'teacher' before 'the church' started re-constructing him as a deity.

Before we can form our own reality, we have to interrogate our 'social reality', and free ourselves from the cultural definitions we have inherited. When you interrogate social reality you may be defined as insane, for not accepting what others claim to be 'reality'. Social reality is socially and historically defined. Today god is dead. As late as the 18th Century questioning the existence of god could get you killed. I don't doubt my life would be shortened even today in some countries, if I were to publicly renounce god's prophet, let alone god 'himself'. Of course the church was generous enough to torture you to death to save your soul.

God never existed in the primary world, however, given that most people operate in social reality, the non-existence of god in the primary world didn't stop god from existing in the social reality, and hence the secondary reality of most people. You can still get dead from secondary and social realities that have no basis in the primary reality.

You can also be saved by secondary realities. The belief in the healing power of the shaman or priest or even doctor can have a placebo effect. Recent empirical research demonstrated that faith in a doctor can have a placebo effect. A knee surgeon of renown pretended to do surgery on some patients, leaving small scars to give the impression that the knee had been surgically operated on. The patient's symptoms improved as dramatically as if their knees had actually been operated on.

The study was done with control groups in which some patients were actually operated on, while the others were given the 'placebo' scars. Many patients regained mobility of joints and experienced a reduction in pain as a result. The people had faith in the surgeon. They were put at ease. It is not really known how the brain manages pain. Sometimes simply relaxing a patient, and distracting their attention, or focusing their attention on an area, can bring relief from symptoms. The original complaints may be psycho-somatic or hysterical in nature.

Some of the earliest studies into placebo effects included giving patients capsules which they were told contained strong pain killers, but which in fact contained only sugar. In a large proportion of the subjects, the patients reported a subjective decrease in pain equivalent to that reported by the patients who had been given the strong pain relievers. There is no reason to doubt that faith healing can work the same way.

Many dis-eases are in fact hysterical or psycho-somatic. The faith in the healer puts the patient at ease. This can return the body to a condition of ease and calm in which it is able to restore itself to health.

Hysterical paralysis was initially studied in war situations. Soldiers had experienced such guilt at not being able to fight, due to a paralyzing fear, that they unconsciously maintained symptoms of paralysis for their entire lives, in order to avoid facing the shame of having let down their comrades. They preferred to be 'paralyzed' than admit they were 'scared' and had let down their comrades. They had convinced themselves they were paralyzed, to avoid the shame of admitting they had 'let down' their mates as they had been too scared to fight.

Faith healing, such as that attributed to Jesus and holy people, is a form of placebo effect. The practice has been illuminated by scientific research. Faith healing and placebo effects are real. They work on the patients belief in the practitioner, be it holy man, or surgeon.

People often wonder why soldiers will get out of their trenches and run directly at machine guns, facing almost certain death. The logic is simple. Their culture has defined some fates as 'worse than death'. The fear of being defined as a 'coward' is greater than the fear of death. And in any case, failure to comply with even insane orders lead to the firing squad. Most of these men preferred dying a 'hero' rather than a 'coward'. Many couldn't conceive of even living with the stigma of being a 'deserter'. Few people are brave enough to stand up to their peers.

Recent cases of mass hysteria have occurred due to the ubiquitous fear of terrorism that the authorities have instigated to breed fear, and an acceptance of the erosion of civil liberties that that fear produces. In the case of the Virgin Air Terminal in which patients' experienced hysterical symptoms in the absence of any pathogen, the actual stress of the perceived situation itself brought on symptoms. A strange smell and the presence of apparent symptoms in some people at an airport terminal found resonance in the mass of passengers and workers, resulting in a form of mass hysteria in which everyone suddenly 'presented' with similar symptoms. The terminal was evacuated, and many people were transported to hospital in ambulances. In fact there had been no pathogen present. The symptoms were purely psychosomatic, or hysterical.

People had been living with a generalized fear or anticipation of some possible terrorist attack using biological agents, and had been susceptible to any suggestion or indicators of such a terrorist action. They developed appropriate 'symptoms', or convinced themselves they were 'under attack'. The result of the dis-ease were 'real' hysterical symptoms. The symptoms, however, disappeared once the 'victims' regained their ease, calm, and composure. The hysteria, however, cost the airport operators millions of dollars due to the evacuation of the airport and cessation of operations.

Historically, the costs of similar 'episodes' is immeasurable. How many people have been murdered in wars, witch-hunts, and died of the consequences of things that didn't exist outside of people's hysterical minds, their subjective and social realities? How many generations will continue to live at best sub-optimal lives, and at worst endure horrific suffering, because of the lack of alignment, the absence of convergence, between the primary, secondary and social realities? Philosophers aim to get their own reality as close as possible to the primary reality.

With at least three realities, it is no wonder that some people become overwhelmed and schizophrenic. If you add to this the fact that social reality is full of lies, and that you have been trained to define these lies as truths, their embedded myths as real, then it is not hard to see a general ground for mental dis-ease. We don't need to go looking for the reasons in complex biological explanations. In fact, we should be wary that the offering of, search for, and exclusive focus on such explanations merely distracts us from the Hegemonic relations of power and privilege which actually produce mental dis-ease. The propounding of, and exclusive focus on, biological explanations for mental dis-ease deflects interrogation of the context in which mental dis-ease emerges. It is this context that needs to be addressed.

Focusing on symptoms is financially lucrative for pharmaceutical companies but it will never produce mental ease, or health. The main problem is that the social context for mental dis-ease is often also the very same social context which provides the beneficiary classes with their benefits.

A simple example will be illuminating. The only clinic ever to have had real success in treating patients with post-traumatic-stress-disorder was shut down by the government. Why? At this clinic therapists validated the experiences of victimization that the patients had suffered at the hands of government bureaucracies. The therapists recognized that the patients had been victims of victimization. Their symptoms were symptoms of victimization, rather than any endogenous mental illness. In other words once the victimization was validated, and the patients could work through their experiences of victimization, they could recover from the experiences.

The problem was that the clinic's success implicitly demonstrated that victimization had occurred, and that the very government that was funding the clinic had been the perpetrator. If the clinic had managed to 'cure' the patient's mental dis-ease, by treating them as 'insane' or 'mentally ill', then the government would have been 'off the hook'. The government could then have denied that any victimization had taken place. The government could point to the psychiatrist's reports in which the patients were labeled as 'mentally ill', to deny any responsibility for the patient's suffering. The state could claim they were only 'victims' of mental illness.

Those victims of 'HealthQuesting' in the N.S.W Department of Education who fight criminal psychiatric evaluations used to define them as 'unfit for service' cannot be 'validated' as victims, as to do so would be to admit that there are problems, that they may actually have been victimized. The only way they will get their jobs back, or even the right to work once more, is to lie, and pretend that they had been 'sick', and were now 'better'. They would have to deny that the victimization they had suffered had ever taken place. They would have to comply with the 'social reality' of the Education department. They would have to reinforce the lie that, within the education department, there are no problems.

This would mean that the victim would have to endure a continual dis-integration of their psychological well-being. They would have to live a lie. I suspect that living such lies is the real basis of most mental dis-ease, which is then defined as mental illness.

Please refer to 'An education in victimization' for details about that clinic, and the 'HealthQuesting' of any employee that challenges the social reality that 'there are no problems' in the N.S.W Education Department. Anyone who actually sees, hears, let alone speaks of the evil that defines that Department is doomed to victimization.

Challenge the ruling social reality within any organization, tribe, culture, or nation, and be prepared for the worst. You will suffer the same fate of all those who challenge the existing hegemonic order. You will be crucified, burnt as a witch, or defined as mentally ill, unless you 'recant', and state that a patently un-real social reality is in fact real. If you invalidate the hegemonic social reality you threaten the privileges of the inept, incompetent, selfish, devious, malicious people who 'manage' that social reality. Of course the perpetrators usually find ways to justify their cruel abuses to themselves. They are, after all, merely human. Anyone aware of human history would find our use of the term 'humane' sadly and incredulously ironic.

However in fact the manufacturers, reproducers, and beneficiaries of the dominant hegemonic social reality rarely have to defend it. Few people want to know about 'problems', especially if they might personally be held accountable for them, or called upon to 'solve' them. No-one wants to be inconvenienced. No-one wants justice for everyone, just for themselves and theirs.

Every culture makes its blood sacrifices. Every society has had its own 'scapegoats'. In the past such sacrifices were obvious and done out in the open. Today such sacrifices are done 'on the sly'. And in keeping with tradition, it is usually the most innocent, the most valuable, who are sacrificed to the 'gods' of social reality, to the myths, to the lies, to the incompetence of our 'managers' and 'leaders'.

I'd like to refer to attempts to undermine whistle-blowers as mere 'malcontents' and 'misfits'. It is true that most people are content to 'go along to get along', until they or theirs are a direct and major victim of the 'status quo'. People know that whistle-blowers will be persecuted socially and economically, and therefore it is usually only the 'individuals', the malcontents and misfits in the organization who are likely to blow the whistle. The others have too much to lose. They value their work relationships more they care about truth, justice, competence, or the

environment. They are mitlaufers by nature. They have no motivation to risk any of the personal benefits they gain from their employment.

Whatever the motives of whistle-blowers, they do not in any way change the facts they are revealing. Of course most whistle-blowers will tend to be disgruntled in some way, and less sympathetic than average. Otherwise why would they risk blowing the whistle? Team-players, mitlaufers, the most popular people, those who are adapted psychologically by denial, the adoption of a flexible 'persona', the wearing of masks, inauthenticity, opportunism, and the desire for approval, acceptance, and above all, success, are all unlikely to care about the truth, and less likely to risk their own convenience, their own current popularity, success, status, privileges and comfort, in the interests of the truth, and the public good.

Whistle-blowers are often discontented working for incompetent management in 'toxic' workplaces, and maybe discontent with the dominant hegemonic social reality in general. They tend to be socially 'marginal' and not big on social integration into the 'mob' or 'herd'. They are more likely to risk losing their jobs than others for the sake of their beliefs and principles, and even lack of patience with incompetent management and 'toxic' workplaces.

However their personal characteristics, for better or worse, do not have any bearing on the facts that they report. Of course smug management and public relations 'spin doctors' often try to discredit the whistle-blower, the 'witness' to managerial incompetence, corruption, and maladministration. They direct our attention away from the clear facts of the whistle-blowers message, and towards their lack of popularity among fellow workers, or their lack of 'integration' in the workplace. This is the equivalent of saying a social democrat under the Nazi regime wasn't a 'team-player', a 'mitlaufer'.

The Hegemony of conventional language formulations in the popular language culture

Problematic language usages interact in the popular language culture to reflexively reinforce invalid formulations of the nature of things. Concepts which, on their own, would be considered at best tenuous, support and reinforce each other in intricately interdependent ways. Many of these iteratively both constitute and emerge from, belief systems which are insidious and ubiquitous, and thoroughly naturalized. These systems distort our experiences of things. We define what we experience in problematic ways. These definitions effectively decouple our subjective or social reality from the primary reality.

We cannot expect that we will optimally interact with our environment, with reality, when we are essentially responding to our own, faulty, definition of reality, and not to reality itself. Our judgments must be faulty, based as they are, on faulty assumptions. Such judgments will have consequences, and costs.

The proper objective of philosophy and science must be to know the world as best we can, so that we, all of us, not just a privileged few, may live in it as best we can.

The more independent and informed our thinking, the more objective we can be, and the closer our secondary reality, our internal models, can approach the primary reality. We are all participants in world views which we are not fully aware of. We go about the world with inherited ways of defining things, of interacting with the world. We have grown into them. We feel comfortable in them. They are familiar. We have fond and sentimental associations and attachments embedded in them. They provide a sense of predictability and security. Many are tied to neuroses that we are dependent on or comfortable with. This cultural inheritance is the real definition of 'culture', more so than costumes, dances, foodstuffs, and rituals.

This cultural inheritance acts like a search engine or screening program, providing definitions for things, and relationships, and directing our attention selectively towards observations and awarenesses which teleologically 'fit', that are consistent with, the 'big picture' we have inherited. This cultural inheritance produces a premature cognitive commitment. This cultural inheritance is the social reality a person lives in. Most people remain passively 'committed' to it.

However contact with other the hegemonic or dominant social realities of other 'cultures', or the shock of the new or unexpected, can jolt us out of our narrow, inherited teleological loops, and allow us authentic experiences of the primary world, potentially more or less free from our subjective, secondary, socio-cultural-educationally inherited sets of internal relations and models.

We can define objectivity as the attempt to de-couple our 'experience' from our cultural inheritance. In its ideal state it is a Zen thing, allowing reality to directly impact on the observer's awareness, bypassing filters, screens, search engines, and inherited definitions. In our less than ideal world, we approach objectivity via transparency, and ruthless interrogation. Such interrogation cannot allow any inhibition, favoritism, sentimentality, or prejudice to bias arguments.

At the same time it is important also to be able to see things from the point of view of the social actors involved in any 'negotiation of reality', what we often naively refer to as 'social interaction' and politics. All interactions with others involve the negotiation of meanings. To productively engage with people, we have to seek to comprehend their cultural inheritance. We need to comprehend their social reality, their ways of seeing, interpreting, and constructing their world, their internal models, their secondary realities. This will allow us to frame any attempts at revealing reality to them in ways that they can better comprehend or relate to. It will allow us to produce analogies which will appeal to, and be meaningful for, them. Imagine what dogs must think of humans walking behind them, picking up their shit in little bags, as if it was so valuable.

When teaching, we should always seek to relate the unknown to the known, to provide touchstones and reference points, analogies and comparisons. For instance, if you are teaching a Spanish person the mechanics of pronouncing the 'th' sound in the English 'the', you can refer to the 'c' sound in 'Barcelona'.

We must be careful, however, that the learner does not merely distort the new and force it into the clothing of the old. This is what often happens during attempts at 'enlightening' people. The value of the inputs is denigrated and corrupted. The 'new' is merely twisted and turned in sometimes clumsy, and often very sophisticated, attempts to reconcile the new with the old. Thus we get the result 'new language, same old shit'.

Modern physicists attempt to reconcile god with physics, contorting the fabric of space time to do so. Thomas Aquinas attempted to reform epistemology, twisting and stretching logic and reason until it lost all logic and reason. The church adapted and accommodated much of the earlier superstitions into its supposedly non-idolic monotheism. The saints took on the roles of the greater and lesser gods of polytheistic cultures, such as the roman gods. Their 'halos' were taken from an earlier Egyptian god, Horus.

Jesus, if he was indeed a real person, was most likely a 'teacher'. His message was the wisdom of love, goodwill, forgiveness, and solidarity. Paul transformed him into a god, maintaining continuity with earlier traditions of god-men. He seems to have sought to adapt the old to the new, to gain acceptance for his own message. The early Roman Catholic Church basically recycled Mithras, the Roman sun god, by ascribing all of Mithras' properties to the 'teacher' Jesus. They adapted most of the 'pagan' forms of worship, rituals and observances, to their new cult. Nothing in Christianity was new at the time. It was a recycling, an 'evolution' of earlier cults and forms of religion.

In seeking to make the new ideas more comprehensible, accessible, or acceptable, the new was contorted and distorted to fit the old. In making the new garment more fashionable, and conventionally acceptable, it was stretched and re-stitched and reinforced and pleated and colored and hemmed to such a degree that it became merely a slightly improved version of the old garment, the old fashion, the old philosophy, the old superstition, the old religion.

That is perhaps the incremental nature of evolutionary, and therefore social, progress. The new mutation must be compatible with the old whole it is a part of. If a telescopic and microscopic eye is so large that it prevents the organism from being able to move freely, to hunt and evade predators, its costs will be greater than its advantages. The new improvements must be reasonably compatible with the old conventional wholes it is integrated with. The messages of the prophets are bound to be contorted to appeal to the conventional wisdom of their times.

Prophets will be converted into gods, so that their messages will appeal to, and be acceptable to, the conventional religions and social orders of their times. A god has never been successfully replaced by a mere 'teacher' or prophet. Even the entire 'paradigm shift' from superstition to scientific method has failed to entirely replace gods. If you want your new model to be accepted, it will have to be compatible with the old one to some extent. It will be a matter of what Neuro-Linguistic Programming refers to as 'mirroring and leading'. Your new must be 'back-wards compatible' with the old. All 'teachers' ultimately become 'prophets', whether they want to or not, and then more or less synonymous with the god they 'speak' for.

The teacher and social prophet, perhaps aspiring King of the Jews, Jesus, was remodeled as the son of god, using the exact same characteristics of the god, Mithras, the new Christian Cult's original competition. Mithras was of virgin birth, as was the Egyptian god Horus. Mithras died and was resurrected after 3 days. The followers of Mithras 'ate his body', like in the Catholic ritual. Mithras spread a message of brotherly love and salvation. The sun-god was recast as the son-of-god. The new Christian cult, adopted by the Roman Emperor, was to become the state religion. It engineered new rituals and celebrations to take place at the same time as the older Mithraic ones.

Of course it is only natural and logical that all the so-called 'pagan' celebrations of life, of renewal, correspond to the same celebrations of the Christian calendar. They all take place at significant times, such as the Summer and winter solstices and equinoxes; the shortest and longest days; and the day when the night is as long as the day, the day on which the days begin to become longer and the promise of renewed life after the 'death' of winter is made good. See 'Religion' for details.

Whether the baby is always bound to be thrown out with the bathwater is debatable. Must the true spiritual message of our 'prophets' and 'teachers' always be lost in the bureaucracy and administration of organized religion? Must we always lose what is good in the original teachings of the putative 'founders' of religious orders? Must their message always be sacrificed and corrupted by the prophets putative 'followers'. It appears so. It is sad but true. The desires of humans to exploit each other and everything else on this planet are not compatible with the messages of the social prophets.

The putative communism of the U.S.S.R that should have been so compatible with Jesus' teachings found the need to ban the church supposedly founded on these teachings. At the same time, that supposedly religious nation ('In God we trust') demonized the very same communism that Jesus seems to have been striving for. Surely the irony in that situation tells us something about organized religion.

Have we really moved so far from the early superstitions of our ancestors? Are our mono-theistic, anthropocentric religions and cultures really superior to the polytheistic, animistic, nature-centered religions and cultures of early humans? Have enough humans advanced to a stage where they can accept the messages of the prophets as teachers and philosophers, and disentangle them from the dogma of the religions they have been hijacked by?

Have enough humans evolved to the point where they can save the baby from the bathwater while avoiding being drowned in the dirty, contaminated water, or dying from the viruses (Memes) that flourish in it? Will we ever be able to re-construct the authentic story and messages of the social prophets and 'moral' philosophers, from the fictions of Mohamed, Paul and his fellow gospel-writers, and all the contributors to the Buddhist, Jain, and Hindu canon? Will we ever be free of superstition and dogma, and able to focus on the compelling arguments and 'moral' intentions of the prophets, both dead and living?

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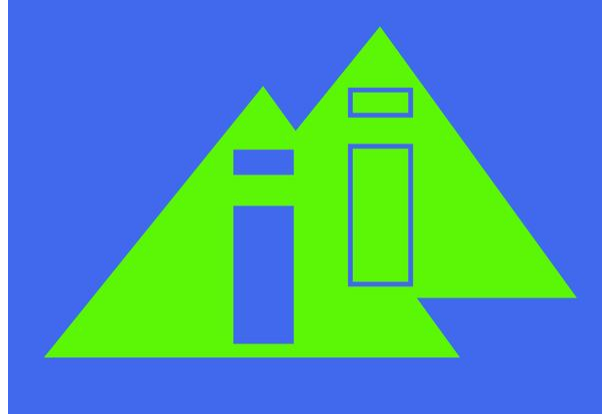
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